



Public Finance

India spells out finance needs for biodiversity, conservation

India expects to spend around ₹81,664 crore on biodiversity and conservation from the financial year 2025 to 2030. From 2018 to 2022, India spent ₹32,207 crore, and to meet the higher financing requirements would require funds from sources beyond routine government expenditure, the country stated in its updated submission at the ongoing 16th edition of Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Colombia (COP-16). (*The Hindu*)

Union Cabinet infuses equity of ₹10,700 crore in FCI

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, on Wednesday, approved the infusion of equity of ₹10,700 crore in Food Corporation of India (FCI) by way of conversion of 'Ways and Means Advance' to equity in 2024-25. This will be used as working capital for the FCI in this financial year. (*The Hindu*)

PM-Vidyalaxmi scheme for higher education gets nod

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday approved a new Central Sector scheme, PM Vidyalaxmi, which seeks to provide financial support to meritorious students in their pursuit of higher education. Under the scheme, a student who secures admission in any of the top 860 Quality Higher Education Institutions (QHEIs), both government and private, will be eligible to get collateral-free, guarantor-free loan from banks and financial institutions to cover full amount of tuition fees and other expenses related to the course. (*The Hindu*)



Taxation

GST receipts' growth rebounds in October, but still off target

India's Gross Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections surpassed ₹1.87 lakh crore in October, marking the second highest monthly collections on record, with growth rebounding to 8.9% in October from September's 40-month low uptick of 6.5%. Net revenues, after factoring in refunds, grew at a slower pace of 7.9% to a tad over ₹1.68 lakh crore in October. (*The Hindu*)

Tax fraud: ₹25,000 GST evasion by 18,000 bogus companies uncovered

Tax authorities have uncovered approximately 18,000 fraudulent companies registered under GST, resulting in an estimated tax evasion of Rs 25,000 crore. These fictitious entities were identified during a nationwide crackdown on fake GST registrations, with voluntary payments of Rs 70 crore collected during the operation. (*The Economic Times*)

IT Dept sets monetary limit for officers to waive or reduce interest

The Income Tax Department has set the three-layered monetary limit for reduction or waiver of interest on unpaid tax. This will help the assesses to approach the exact hierarchy to get relief. According to an order issued by the Department, interest up to ₹50 lakhs can be reduced or waived by Principal Commissioner (Pr. CIT) or Commissioner (CIT). *(BusinessLine)*

AY25 ITR filing set to see significant rise, but ITR 1 growth subdued

As due date for filing income tax returns (ITR) for all categories of taxpayers except transfer pricing cases comes to an end in the next fortnight, the number of filers is set to exceed in the current Assessment Year (2024-25 or AY25) by a good margin as compared to the previous Assessment Year (2023-24 or AY24). However, the growth in ITR 1 category, which has the maximum share in overall filing, is witnessing stagnant growth on AY-basis and de-growth on fiscal year basis. *(BusinessLine)*

Indirect tax related quasi-judicial adjudication, appeal cases to mandatorily heard in virtual mode

Now, all quasi-judicial adjudication and appeal cases related with indirect taxes will mandatorily be heard in virtual mode as Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC) has reinstated August 2020 position. Experts believe such a move is likely to complete the process quickly and bring down the logistic cost. Meanwhile, in another move, the Government has said that from April next year, GST assessee with annual turnover of ₹10 crores and above would not be allowed to report e-Invoices older than 30 days. *(BusinessLine)*



National Accounts and State of the Economy

India should be part of RCEP, CPTPP: NITI Aayog CEO B.V.R Subrahmanyam

India should be a part of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership and Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, NITI Aayog CEO B.V.R. Subrahmanyam said on Thursday. India pulled out of the RCEP in 2019 after entering negotiations in 2013. The RCEP bloc comprises 10 ASEAN group members (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines, Laos and Vietnam) and six FTA partners — China, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand. *(The Hindu)*

States endorse MoSPI plan for district surveys

All states have endorsed the ministry of statistics and programme implementation (MoSPI) proposal for conducting surveys at the district level for assessing their economic size and inflation levels. Data on household consumption, employment and inflation, among many others, across all districts will be collected as part of this exercise. *(The Economic Times)*

A 4.7-degree rise in temperature will make Indian economy sweat, ADB report reveals

A recent ADB report predicts that India could face a 24.7% GDP loss by 2070 due to climate change, with overall regional losses reaching 16.9%. Labor productivity, energy

demands, and flooding are key factors contributing to these losses. The report underscores the urgent need for significant investment in climate adaptation, estimating annual costs of \$102 billion to \$431 billion across Asia-Pacific. *(The Economic Times)*

Festive consumption growth halved in 2024: Nomura

Nomura reports that festive consumption growth in India has halved to 15% this year, attributing the slowdown to weak demand in major cities and industrial areas. Despite steady demand in rural areas and smaller cities, overall festive sales growth has been mixed. *(The Economic Times)*

India's Q2 GDP growth may slow down to 6.5%; FY25 growth seen closer to 7%: SBI

SBI economists predict a dip in India's GDP growth to 6.5% for the September quarter, citing temporary pressures on the domestic economy. Despite this, they maintain an optimistic outlook, expecting a rebound in the following quarter fueled by rising rural demand and anticipate FY25 growth to approach 7%. *(The Economic Times)*

RBI's Shaktikanta Das said economic activity remains strong, warns October inflation print could be above 5.5%

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das stated that India's economy remains robust but warned of escalating inflation, potentially surpassing September's 5.5%. He indicated that high inflation might deter interest rate cuts in the upcoming December policy review. Das also highlighted the resilience of India's financial sector and its ability to withstand global economic fluctuations. *(The Economic Times)*

Rural consumption grows double than urban market in September quarter: NielsenIQ

India's FMCG industry is experiencing a rural surge, with rural markets outpacing urban areas in consumption growth. While urban demand sees a slight uptick, rural areas are driving volume growth, fueled by staples and small to mid-sized FMCG companies. *(The Economic Times)*

Drop in nutrition, calorie intake in almost 80% of rural population: Economist Utsa Patnaik

Economist Utsa Patnaik estimates that over 80% of India's rural population now consumes less than 2,200 calories daily. This signifies a decline in food and nutrition intake since the 1990s. Patnaik highlighted the impact of neoliberal policies and international trade agreements on India's agricultural sector. She criticized the government's data reliability and the undermining of support systems for farmers. *(The Economic Times)*

India changes timing of revealing its GDP data

The Government of India has announced a change in the release timing for its quarterly Gross Domestic Product (GDP) estimates, moving the release time to 4:00 PM IST from 5.30 PM. *(The Economic Times)*



Banking and Monetary Policy

Open season on bankers: staff seek steps to address the lack of security

A day after The Hindu published a report on growing assaults on bankers in Maharashtra during the implementation of the Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana, a direct benefit transfer scheme, bankers from different parts of the country have sought the Finance Minister's intervention to bring about a Bankers' Protection Act, and address the issue of staff shortage. *(The Hindu)*

RBI invites applications for Deputy Governor's post

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has invited applications for the post of Deputy Governor. Deputy Governor Michael Debabrata Patra, in charge of monetary policy and a member of the central bank's Monetary Policy Committee, is scheduled to retire in January 2025. The applicants, must not be over 60 years of age as on January 15, 2025, and have at least 25 years of work experience in public administration. The appointment will be for a period of three years. *(The Hindu)*

'98% of ₹2000 notes returned; ₹6,970 cr. notes with public'

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said 98.04% of the ₹2000 banknotes have been returned to the banking system, and only ₹6,970 crore worth notes are still with the public. On May 19, 2023, the RBI announced the withdrawal of ₹2000 banknotes from circulation. The total value of ₹2000 banknotes in circulation was ₹3.56 lakh crore at the close of business on May 19, 2023. It has declined to ₹6,970 crore at the close of business on October 31, 2024, the RBI said. *(The Hindu)*

'BoB to open 600 branches, strengthen retail, agriculture, MSME loan focus'

As part of its plan to double its business (deposits + advances) to ₹48 lakh crore in five years, Bank of Baroda (BoB) aims to add 600 branches in the next two to three years even as it seeks to further increase the 'RAM' (retail, agriculture and MSME) tilt of its loan portfolio. In an interaction with businessline, MD & CEO Debadatta Chand noted that the public sector bank had revised its credit and deposit growth targets for FY25 lower in order to moderate the credit-deposit (CD) ratio. *(BusinessLine)*

Banks' NIM falls in Q2 as RBI's penal charge diktat takes effect, deposit cost rises

Large and mid-sized banks have seen a fall in their net interest margin (NIM) – a key indicator of lenders' profitability — in Q2 on account of lower yield on advances, higher cost of deposit and the effect of Reserve Bank of India's circular on levy of penal charges. *(BusinessLine)*

Reserve Bank amends master direction on KYC

The Reserve Bank on Wednesday made changes to the Know Your Customer (KCC) norms to align them with recent amendments carried out in the Prevention of Money Laundering (Maintenance of Records) Rules and revised certain existing instructions. *(BusinessLine)*

Fight for deposits may dent banks' interest margins by 20 bps: S&P

Fight for deposits in an eventually declining rate cycle in India will add pressures on the net interest margins (NIM) for banks by 20 basis points, S&P Global said. Banks may see

a further margin squeeze if credit and deposit growth remains steady. (*The Economic Times*)

Digital payment's rise leads to shutting of ATMs

Despite the cash in circulation being at an all-time high, banks are shutting down more automatic teller machines and cash recycler machines than they are opening, amid the increasing focus on digital transactions and consumer preference towards UPI for carrying out routine payments. (*The Economic Times*)

FinMin asks PSU banks to speed up credit growth

The finance ministry on Tuesday asked public sector banks (PSBs) to mobilise low-cost current and savings account deposits to accelerate the pace of sustainable credit growth, and to align their digital and cybersecurity frameworks with industry best practices to ensure customer protection and operational continuity. (*The Economic Times*)



External Sector

India rises as global player in petroleum, gemstone, sugar exports with surging market share in 5 yrs

India's export competitiveness has witnessed healthy gains in multiple sectors -- particularly petroleum, gemstones, agrochemicals and sugar -- during the last five years, as these segments have increased their share in global trade, according to the commerce ministry data. The other sectors where the share of India's exports has increased during 2018 and 2023 are electrical goods, pneumatic tyres, taps and valves, and semiconductor devices. (*The Economic Times*)

Brazil has potential to be major source for India's urad, tur imports: Govt

India is exploring Brazil as a major source for black gram and pigeon pea imports to meet domestic demand. Brazil's urad bean exports to India have already surged. This strategic partnership leverages contrasting cropping seasons, enabling countries like Brazil and Australia to tailor production to India's needs, as demonstrated by increased chickpea imports from Australia. (*The Economic Times*)

India gets Trump-ready, draws up new policy briefs

Following Donald Trump's election as US president, Indian officials are drafting policy briefs on trade and investment. These aim to address potential concerns about India's trade practices and highlight investment opportunities, particularly in infrastructure and supply chain diversification away from China. (*The Economic Times*)

Maruti Suzuki eyes 850,000 export mark after historic high in October

Maruti Suzuki India Ltd (MSIL), the largest passenger vehicle manufacturer in India, has set a road map to expand its global presence by targeting exports of 850,000 units by the end of this decade -- almost double the approximately 280,000 units sent abroad in 2023-24. The company's upcoming electric vehicle (EV) strategy is expected to play a crucial role in its global ambitions. In October, the company had rung up a 51 per cent jump in export, its historic high, to 33,168 units, up from 21,951 units in October 2023. (*Business Standard*)

Anti-dumping duty recommended on PVC resin from 7 countries

India's trade defence body Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) has recommended imposition of provisional anti-dumping duty of up to \$339 per metric tonne on imports of PVC suspension resin from seven countries, including China and US. PVC suspension resin is the main raw material for rigid and flexible plastics. It is widely used for making pipes, packaging material, bottles, footwear and cable insulation. *(Financial Express)*



Agriculture and Rural Economy

'Lifting of MEP on non-Basmati rice helps India compete globally'

In the first tender for the supply of 50,000 tonnes of parboiled rice floated by the Bangladesh government, which is likely to buy over 5 lakh tonnes (lt) in tranches, Pattabhi Agro Food of India has emerged as the lowest bidder after quoting \$477/tonne (CIF) at Chattogram and Mongla ports. The Food Ministry of Bangladesh has floated another tender for 50,000 tonnes on November 4, which will be opened on November 18. *(BusinessLine)*

Agri-commodities gain on Trump's hardline policy talk

Prices of many agricultural commodities increased on Thursday, while crude oil and metals were under pressure as the dollar gained as a fallout out of US President-elect Donald Trump's 'protectionist policy' views. The rise in the US dollar since the elections has also swayed the commodities market. The global grains market has been worried over the US elections particularly since US President-elect Donald Trump was voicing about protectionism. His rival Kamala Harris, too, talked of similar policies, though not as strongly as Trump. *(BusinessLine)*

Tracking lacuna limits CSR's contributions to agri sustainability

A decade ago, India became the first country to legally mandate Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Section 135 of the Companies Act 2013 outlines the rules and regulations governing CSR. Its role in social development is crucial. According to the National CSR Portal, from 2014 to 2023, Rs 1.84 lakh crore of CSR funds were disbursed. *(The Hindu)*

Rajasthan sees boost in rabi crop sowing after favourable monsoon rains

Rajasthan's acreage under rabi crops is expected to increase this year as the state received adequate rainfall during the monsoon season, which augurs well for the sowing of all winter crops. According to data from the state agriculture department, sowing areas of mustard, wheat, gram, and barley will increase. Rajasthan leads in the production of these crops. It is the country's top mustard producer, contributing around 40-45 per cent to the country's total mustard production. *(Business Standard)*

India's cotton and pulses farmers shift to paddy, set to produce record 120 million tonnes rice

India's rice production in 2024 kharif season is estimated at 119.93 million tonnes (mt), which shows that the output has jumped by about 30 mt in the past decade alone. The rice

output in the last kharif was 113.26 mt. This also reflects farmers' growing preference for paddy crop when there is uncertainty over yield and prices of other crops, experts said. *(BusinessLine)*

Rice output expected to grow 5.9% this kharif season, shows data

Rice production in the recently concluded kharif season is expected to be around 120 million tonnes (mt), which is a 5.9 per cent increase from the same season last year, on the back of a surplus monsoon and improved acreage, according to data from the first advanced estimate for 2024-25 (July-June) released on Tuesday. *(Business Standard)*

Govt launches Phase-II of subsidised wheat flour, rice sale under Bharat brand

The government on Tuesday launched phase-II retail sales of wheat flour and rice under the Bharat brand at subsidised rates to provide relief to consumers from high prices. Wheat flour (atta) will be sold at Rs 30 per kg and rice at Rs 34 per kg in 5kg and 10kg packets through cooperatives NCCF, Nafed and Kendriya Bhandar. *(The Economic Times)*



Industry, Manufacturing, Services and Technology

Factory activity rebounded in October from 8-month low in Sept

Manufacturing activity in India's private sector recovered in October, breaking a three-month streak of deceleration after hitting an eight-month low in September, as per the survey-based HSBC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) which inched up to 57.5 from 56.5 in the previous month. A reading of over 50 on the PMI indicates an expansion in activity. *(The Hindu)*

Rising STEM research demands revitalised education

Higher educational institutions in India face significant challenges. While private engineering colleges, the newer Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) and universities have expanded access to education over the last few decades, studies show that a vast majority of students graduating from these colleges lack the basic skills that are required by industry. *(The Hindu)*

BFSI Summit: Industry experts discuss future growth paths for NBFCs, MFIs

In India's evolving financial landscape, non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and microfinance institutions (MFIs) are also adapting to reach the last mile, said industry experts on Thursday at the Business Standard BFSI Insight Summit 2024, India's biggest banking, financial services, and insurance (BFSI) event. *(Business Standard)*

Indian IT industry confident amid potential Trump return, sees reduced H1B visa dependency

The Indian IT industry, which generated revenue of \$254 billion last year, sees no trouble in Donald Trump return to power after a four-year gap. Despite challenges faced during Trump's previous administration, the industry is now more stable, reducing its reliance on H1B visas and building capacities to become a global hub for Global Capability Centres (GCCs). The US is the biggest export market for the Indian IT industry. *(BusinessLine)*

IIT Madras Pravartak Technologies & SWAYAM Plus launch semiconductor industry training

IIT Madras Pravartak Technologies Foundation is partnering with the SWAYAM Plus initiative of the Union Education Ministry to launch a training program in the semiconductor industry for students and graduates. This skill-based training program is intended for Engineering and Science students and graduates from Electronics / Electrical / Mechanical / Manufacturing / Production disciplines, says a release. *(BusinessLine)*

TReDS limit may be cut to Rs 250 crore to onboard more companies

The Centre is likely to soon lower the turnover threshold for mandatory onboarding of buyers on the Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS) to ₹250 crore from ₹500 crore. This measure will bring an additional 22 central public sector enterprises and 7,000 more companies onto the central bank-backed invoice discounting platform. A notification to this effect could be issued soon, a government official told ET. *(The Economic Times)*

Regulator looks to redefine PNG, insist on transport only by pipeline

The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) is planning to amend the definition of piped natural gas (PNG) in its regulation, overriding objections from some city gas companies, according to people familiar with the matter. In 2018, the regulator expanded the definition of "piped natural gas" in its city gas licensing regulation to mean "natural gas transported through pipelines or cascades or any other permitted mode". *(The Economic Times)*

Trump's victory sparks a bullion promises: Gold price falls

Donald Trump's return as the US President caused a decline in gold prices on Wednesday, bringing relief to consumers preparing for the busy wedding season. Prices of the yellow metal fell by ₹500 per 10 gm to ₹78,100 in the physical market. Prices are expected to continue their downward momentum in the near term, said gold traders and analysts. *(The Economic Times)*

Motown reaps huge gains from double festive cheer in October

Vehicle registrations-a proxy for retail sales-surged 32% in October from a year earlier, propelled by the key festivals of Navratri and Diwali falling during the month, the Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) said on Wednesday. Led by a 36% rise in two-wheeler sales to over 2.06 million units, total automobile retails during the month rose to over 2.83 million units from over 2.14 million a year ago. *(The Economic Times)*

Irdai proposes to amend regulatory sandbox norms

Regulator Irdai has proposed to amend the norms related to 'regulatory sandbox' by incorporating principle-based approach and further facilitate adoption of innovative ideas and new concepts across the insurance value chain. Regulatory sandbox usually refers to live testing of new products or services in a controlled/test regulatory environment for which regulators may or may not permit certain relaxations. *(The Economic Times)*

Global solar capacity hits 2 TW on path to climate goal, data shows

Global solar capacity has reached a record 2 terawatts (TW) of capacity, with more added in the last two years than the previous 68 combined, exclusive data from the sector's global industry group shared with Reuters showed. The updated figures have not

previously been published, and the Global Solar Council said they give the fullest picture yet because they include small, rooftop installations often left out of official government data. *(The Economic Times)*

Renewable energy offers a cost and opportunity to insurance sector

Policyholders in the renewable energy insurance market are paying between 20%-40% more for cover today than a year ago as insurers seek to recover the cost of "devastating claims" in regions hit by natural catastrophes, industry sources say. Unpredictable weather patterns have exposed weaknesses in the models used to price risk as golf ball-sized hailstones on solar panels and lightning strikes on wind turbines have left insurers with much bigger bills than expected. *(The Economic Times)*

Prolonged Chinese imports may hit Indian steel industry's investments, Tata Steel CEO says

India's steel imports from China were "unfairly priced" and prolonged shipments could hurt investment plans of the domestic steel industry, the chief executive of Tata Steel told Reuters on Thursday. "It's not that Chinese steel is more competitive...they just are able to keep selling steel even at prices at which they lose money, which is obviously unfair competition," said T. V. Narendran, chief executive officer and managing director at Tata Steel. *(The Economic Times)*

Buyers in possession should get ownership of flat: IBBI

The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) has proposed the transfer of the ownership of a plot or flat to buyers who owe no dues and are already in possession of the property during the bankruptcy resolution of the stressed real estate firm, subject to the approval of the committee of creditors (CoC). *(The Economic Times)*

Govt looks at setting up refuelling stations along southern coast for green ships

The Union government is considering setting up green hydrogen refueling stations for green ships along the southern coast of India to cater to vessels on the Indian Ocean, said Abhay Bhakre, mission director for the National Green Hydrogen Mission, said on Thursday. *(Mint)*



News on Kerala

Kerala govt. to allow private investors in developing tourist destinations

Kerala has decided to allow private individuals to invest in the development of tourist destinations. They can invest up to 60% of the cost under the 'destination challenge' project and the State will give a proportional share of the revenue to the investor. The project envisaged developing potential tourism destinations in collaboration with local self-government institutions (LSGIs), at least one in each local body. *(The Hindu)*

Kerala CM Vijayan urges Centre to release grant for Vizhinjam seaport

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has urged Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to release the Centre's share of Rs 817.80 crore in the Viability Gap Funding (VGF) for the Vizhinjam seaport here without imposing the condition that the state has to repay it later. *(Business Standard)*

Kerala CM writes to railway minister, cites 'safety violations' in jobs

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has written to Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav citing "safety violations" and requesting to issue suitable instructions to ensure the safety of the contract staff. In his letter, the Chief Minister said that the government of Kerala is deeply anguished at the tragic incident that occurred on the river bridge near Shoranur Railway Station, in which four workers including two women, belonging to Tamil Nadu lost their lives. (*Business Standard*)

PSC has no power to conduct inquiry into caste status of applicant: Kerala HC

The Kerala State Public Service Commission (PSC) has no power to conduct an inquiry into an applicant's caste status and determine his or her caste, a Division Bench of the Kerala High Court has ruled. The Bench made the ruling recently while allowing a petition by Anu S.P. of Thiruvananthapuram challenging an order of the PSC cancelling his advice memo for the post of fireman. The memo was cancelled on the ground that he had committed fraud on his caste status. (*The Hindu*)

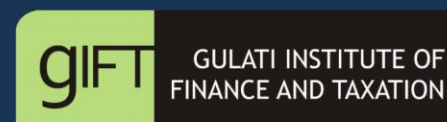
Why south India wants big families

If the public policies – especially the decision of fund transfer to the states – is based on population, southern states are bound to lose out as they have effectively controlled the population over time through better education and empowerment of women. Recently, Andhra Pradesh chief minister Chandrababu Naidu urged people in the state to have more children. Tamil Nadu chief minister MK Stalin also asked why bigger families should not be the norm. Lekha Chakraborty explains the political, economic, and social reasons behind these statements. (*Financial Express*)

Property gifted by Muslims need not be registered: Kerala HC

The Kerala High Court has held that Section 123 of the Transfer of Property Act which mandates that a gift of immovable property can be made only through a registered document, is not applicable to Muslims. The court made the ruling recently while allowing a writ petition filed by Razak H. from Palakkad challenging the refusal of the Village Officer, Kanjikode to mutate the land gifted orally in favour of the petitioner by his father and accept land tax and provide Thandaper account. (*The Hindu*)

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