WEEKLY UPDATES ON
FINANCE, TAXATION & THE INDIAN ECONOMY

07 March, 2025

GIFT GULATI INSTITUTE OF FINANCE AND TAXATION
An Autonomous Institution of Government of Kerala

Public Finance

A balance between capital outlays and fiscal prudence

The Budget comes at a time when the government faces a delicate balancing act between expenditure priorities and the need for fiscal prudence as it is the last full Budget before the general elections. From a macroeconomic standpoint, two areas were of concern: the fiscal deficit target for 2023-24 (FY24) and the allocation for capital expenditure (capex). On both counts, the Budget has stuck to the trajectory of previous years.There are five issues that need to be analysed in this Budget — three from a growth and fiscal stability perspective and two from a welfare perspective. *(The Hindu)*

CAG and 16th Finance Commission hold consultation on public finance

India's Comptroller and Auditor General, K. Sanjay Murthy, met with the 16th Finance Commission in Bhopal on March 5, 2025, as part of their ongoing assessment of the financial landscape of the Centre and States. The discussions primarily focused on Union and State finances, local bodies, and Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs). *(The Hindu)*

From upcoming financial year onwards, all schemes' funds must flow via single nodal agency: FM Sitharaman

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman Saturday directed the Department of Expenditure to ensure that funding for all schemes and projects are routed through a single nodal agency from the next fiscal year and asked it to work with the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) for a smooth transition. Sitharaman suggested that the CGA examine whether making the government's annual accounts more user-friendly would be possible. *(The Economic Times)*

Andhra Pradesh Budget 2025-26: Experts flag increasing public debt

The Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly's Budget for 2025-26 presents an alarming financial picture, with public debt expected to rise to ₹1.02 lakh crore in 2025-26, with a total outlay of ₹3,22,359 lakh crore. This represents a significant increase of over ₹25,000 crore in public debt in just one year, necessitating the government's request for assistance from the Union government. *(The Hindu)*

Increase share of states in Central taxes pool to 48%, MP CM tells 16th Finance Commission

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav has requested the 16th Finance Commission to increase the share of states in the Central taxes pool from 44% to 48% to ensure the nation's development. Yadav emphasized that developed India requires a developed Madhya Pradesh, and the strength of the nation lies in the strength of the states. Therefore, the share of states in Central taxes and revenue receipts, such as grants, must be increased. *(The Economic Times)*

EPFO claims huge liability in disbursing higher pension

Pensioners' rights activists and trade union representatives on its Board question EPFO's stand on the issue, say the organisation is only highlighting 'inflated liability to create a wrong hype'. The Employees Provident Fund Organisation fears that it may have to spend ₹1,86,920 crore to pay higher pension to just 50% of the applicants. In a note circulated to its Central Board of Trustees (CBT) at a recent meeting, the EPFO provided an actuarial analysis of the current situation, which was termed incomplete by the workers' representatives. They have asked it to present a detailed picture of the situation. *(The Hindu)*

Heavy debt supply to further push up cost of borrowing for Indian states

Indian states have raised 505 billion rupees ($5.80 billion) through bond sales, raising the highest quantum for this financial year. The state government typically pays a premium above central government bonds yields due to their quasi-sovereign nature. The overall supply is expected to hit a record high in fiscal 2025. The bond yields range from 7.21%-7.34%. *(The Economic Times)*

Tighter fiscal policy in works with capex outlay at 3% of GDP

The government is planning to further strengthen financial discipline and tailor budgetary allocations accordingly as it aims to trim the debt ratio by about seven percentage points by FY31 as announced in the budget, said people aware of the discussions.The finance ministry aims to maintain core capex outlay at a minimum of 3% of GDP, adjusting based on private investments, while closely monitoring fund utilization and absorptive capacity of ministries. *(The Economic Times)*

States completing projects in time may get priority in Centre's Special Loan Plan

States completing projects on time may be given priority in the Centre's interest-free 50-year special assistance loan from 2025-26, said officials. The Department of Expenditure is finalising the conditions for the 50-year interest-free loan to states and could introduce some measures to make it flexible for the states, they said.
(The Economic Times)

Plans afoot to add local bodies to TSA mechanism by FY27

The Centre is developing the next version of the Public Financial Management System 2.0 to ensure efficient and transparent fund utilization for urban and rural local bodies. The Controller General of Accounts is working on a standard accounting process for these bodies, with the aim to integrate them with the Treasury Single Account by FY27. This initiative aims to prevent financial mismanagement and improve fund utilization.
(The Economic Times)

Free trade agreement tariff concessions cost India Rs 94,172 crore in FY25

With India negotiating trade deals with developed economies like the United States (US), European Union (EU), and United Kingdom (UK), its customs duty collection, budgeted to grow only 2.1 per cent to ₹2.4 trillion in FY26, may come under more pressure than it is now. India had forgone ₹94,172 crore as customs duty in FY25 due to preferential tariff reductions under free-trade agreements (FTAs) signed with entities such as Japan, South Korea, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean). *(Business Standard)*

Taxation

GST officials conduct searches at three offices of RBL Bank

GST authorities conducted searches at three offices of RBL Bank in Maharashtra, the private sector lender said. In a regulatory filing, RBL Bank said on March 3, Maharashtra

GST authorities initiated searches at the three offices of RBL Bank. "The proceedings are ongoing and the bank is co-operating fully in providing data as per request placed," the bank had said in a filing. Shares of RBL Bank declined 0.29% to close at ₹154.50 on the BSE on Tuesday. *(The Hindu)*

Little has changed in the Income-Tax Bill, 2025

The Union Finance Minister introduced the Income-Tax Bill, 2025, in Parliament in February 2025. The bill aims to replace the 1961 Income-Tax Act, which is considered unwieldy and unclear for taxpayers and administrators due to provisos, exceptions, and non-obstante clauses. The new draft aims to provide greater certainty in taxation, reduce litigation, and create a fairer, more predictable tax environment, aiming to simplify the law for both taxpayers and administrators. *(The Hindu)*

The implications of treating Virtual Digital Assets as taxable properties

For the first time in India, the Income Tax Bill, 2025 explicitly treats VDAs as property (Section 92 (5)(f)) and capital assets. This classification has far-reaching consequences in terms of taxation, compliance, and legal recognition. The bill categorically states that VDAs, which include crypto assets, Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs), and similar digital assets, should be considered property. This move aligns India with global practices, where digital assets are either classified as securities (like in the U.S.) or property (like in the U.K., Australia, and New Zealand). *(The Hindu)*

Gross GST collections increase 9.1% to Rs 1.84 trillion in February

Gross GST collections rose by 9.1 per cent to about Rs 1.84 trillion in February, boosted by domestic consumption and indicating potential economic revival. As per the official data released on Saturday, on a gross basis, mop up from Central GST stood at Rs 35,204 crore, State GST at Rs 43,704 crore, Integrated GST at Rs 90,870 crore and compensation cess of Rs 13,868 crore. GST revenues from domestic transactions jumped 10.2 per cent to Rs 1.42 trillion while that from imports grew 5.4 per cent to Rs 41,702 crore during February. *(Business Standard)*

New rule for GST registration: Now biometric authentication in your home state is possible when you do GST registration in another state

The Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN) has introduced an additional facility allowing promoters and directors of a company to complete their Biometric Authentication for completion of GST registration process in their home state. Earlier for getting a Goods and Services Tax (GST) registration, you either needed to use the OTP verification method or use Biometric Authentication process by physically visiting the GST Suvidha Kendra in the company's registered jurisdiction, which is in the state in which you are registering your GST. *(The Economic Times)*

Tax officers may soon access your social media a/c, emails

Starting April 2026, a significant change in India's income tax rules will give tax authorities the power to access a wide range of private digital spaces, including emails, social media accounts, and online financial platforms. Under the proposed Income Tax Bill 2025, if a tax officer suspects someone of hiding income or assets, they will be able to override access codes and directly enter digital spaces to gather information. *(Business Standard)*

National Accounts and State of the Economy

Centring care in India's economic policy

Globally, women spend an average of 17.8% of their time on unpaid care and domestic work (UCDW), with women in the Global South bearing higher burdens. The International Labour Organization reports that 53% of Indian women remain outside the labour force due to care responsibilities, compared to just 1.1% of men, underscoring entrenched inequities. *(The Hindu)*

Sustaining change in Indian labour markets

India's job market is improving, with a rebound in unincorporated sector employment, a surge in MSME jobs, and rising manufacturing employment. Rural job diversity is increasing, with more women entering the workforce. However, youth unemployment remains high due to job aspirations, and wage growth for self-employed and casual workers is notable. Steady economic growth and policy support are fostering job creation, but sustained investment, skilling, and macroeconomic stability are crucial for long-term labor market improvements. *(The Hindu)*

Battle for growth: Increase in government spending, private consumption bode well

The 6.2% growth rate also suggests that the government's full-year growth target of 6.5% is virtually unattainable, given global headwinds of tariffs that could lead to imported inflation, amid tepid performance by the manufacturing and services sector domestically. The bulk of Q3FY25 growth has been bolstered by the primary sector, with a value-add of 5.2%, up from 1.8% in the same quarter last year. *(The Hindu)*

Resilience in growth: India's GDP to be steady at 6.5% in FY26 despite challenges, says Crisil

India's real GDP growth is expected to be steady at 6.5 per cent in fiscal 2026 despite uncertainties stemming from geopolitical turns and trade-related issues led by tariff actions by the US. With fiscal impulse normalising and the high-base effect wearing off, growth is now returning to pre-pandemic rates. Even with that, Crisil said, the high frequency Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) data reveals that India maintains its pole position among major economies. *(Financial Express)*

Banking and Monetary Policy

IMF: overexposure by NBFCs may imperil financial system

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has warned that stress in non-banking finance companies (NBFCs) could pose financial system risks due to their overexposure to the power and infrastructure sector and interconnectedness with other markets. The IMF's report reveals that 63% of power sector loans were from three large infrastructure financing companies in fiscal 2024, an increase from 55% in 2019-20. The IMF also noted that NBFCs' dependence on bank borrowings has increased since fiscal 2019, putting state-owned NBFCs like IREDA at higher risk. *(The Hindu)*

Reserve Bank to buy ₹1 lakh crore G-Secs

Reserve Bank of India on Wednesday announced open market purchases of government securities (G-Secs) of ₹1 lakh crore. The move followed a review of current and evolving liquidity conditions, the banking regulator said.The liquidity injection will happen in two tranches: ₹50,000 crore on March 12 and the rest on March 18, the RBI said. In addition, the RBI also announced it would undertake rupee/U.S. Dollar swaps worth $10 billion for a 36-month tenor on March 24. “The Reserve Bank of India will continue to monitor evolving liquidity and market conditions and take measures as appropriate to ensure orderly liquidity conditions,” said the RBI in the statement.
(The Hindu)

SEBI says all NBFCs, HFCs can invest in ARC security receipts

SEBI has permitted non-banking financial companies, including housing finance companies, to invest in security receipts issued by asset reconstruction companies (ARCs), aiming to encourage investments in bad loans. This broadens the scope of participants who can acquire security receipts from ARCs, boosting liquidity in the distressed asset market. ARCs acquire bad loans from banks and financial institutions after appropriate haircuts and issue security receipts. *(The Hindu)*

RBI signals intent to ensure banking liquidity surplus, analysts say

The Indian central bank plans to maintain a surplus in banking system liquidity, allowing banks to pass on policy rate cuts to consumers. This will lead to a steepening of the yield curve, benefiting the money market and corporate debt instruments. The RBI's heavy fund infusion indicates discomfort with the deficit, which is considered a prerequisite for effective monetary policy transmission and growth. *(The Economic Times)*

RBI will have to cut CRR to ease banking liquidity; Mahakumbh leads to significant cash withdrawals: SBI Report

A State Bank of India (SBI) report suggests that the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will need to reduce the Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) to alleviate liquidity pressure in the banking sector. The report suggests that with unchanged government securities ownership in FY26, the Open Market Operations gap could still be around Rs 1.7 trillion, suggesting the need for sustained liquidity measures.*(The Economic Times)*

Banks likely to go easy on funding to NBFCs

Indian banks are unlikely to take immediate advantage of recent regulatory latitude to resume significant lending to last-mile non-bank financiers and microlenders as the financial stress among this class of borrowers - often most vulnerable to economic cycles - is yet to subside. Last week, the Reserve Bank lowered the capital buffer lenders needed to assign against such loans after having raised the risk weights nearly 15 months ago. It restored the older risk weights on loans to NBFCs effective April 1, and those on microfinance lenders and borrowers immediately. *(The Economic Times)*

External Sector

Indian rice likely to gain from US tariff war with Mexico, Canada

India could capitalize on US President Trump's reciprocal tariffs by exporting rice to Mexico, Canada, and countries that import US rice, according to global rice expert Samarendu Mohanty. The US exports rice to Central and South America, Japan, the Caribbean region, Canada, and the Gulf region, with Mexico and Canada being the most affected by increased trade tariffs. *(BusinessLine)*

India-US trade deal long overdue, it will boost GDP of both nations: USIBC

For years, US and Indian businesses have invested in each other's countries without a formal investment or trade framework. India represents only 2.5 percent of America's trade volumes, and that number can and should increase substantially. Now, both sides should work with focus to formalise a level playing field, full and open market access, swift dispute arbitration, and predictable tax and regulatory policies to boost investment, growth, and job creation in both countries. *(Business Standard)*

Australia, the partner for India's growth trajectory

Fuelled by our free trade agreement, the Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA), the India-Australia relationship has grown at the high end of our expectations. Take this one telling statistic. India's exports to the world have grown by 35% in the last five years. But India's exports to Australia have grown by 66% — nearly twice as fast as India's exports to the rest of the world. That is because India is growing in ways that are complementary to Australia's own economy. *(The Hindu)*

'India very high tariff nation': Trump as he warns of reciprocal tariffs

Trump claimed that the US trade deficit with India is nearly $100 billion and agreed to initiate negotiations to resolve long-standing trade disparities. Both leaders stated that these issues should have been addressed over the last four years, and their goal is to sign an agreement. Trump also noted India's strong stance on tariffs in a joint press conference with Modi. *(Business Standard)*

Indian rice likely to gain from US tariff war with Mexico, Canada

India could benefit from US President Trump's reciprocal tariffs by exporting rice to Mexico, Canada, and importers of US rice, according to global rice expert Samarendu Mohanty. Mexico and Canada are most affected by increased tariffs, offering India a significant opportunity. *(BusinessLine)*

India may offer duty concessions to US on soya oil, apple and lentils

India has the potential to reduce tariffs on soyabean oil, lentils, and apple, but poultry may not be included in negotiations with the US. If the US allows India to re-recognize its organic certification program, it could potentially reduce import duties on certain products. Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal is currently in the US to discuss tariff-related issues with officials following President Trump's criticism of India's high import tariffs. *(BusinessLine)*

Engineering goods exports to the U.S. rose 18% to $1.62 billion in January

The U.S. remained top destination for the country's engineering goods during January as well as in cumulative terms followed by the UAE. For the 10 months ended January this fiscal, India's engineering exports to the U.S. increased nearly 9% to $15.60 billion ($14.38 billion), EEPC India said on Wednesday. *(The Hindu)*

US eyes zero tariff on cars in India trade deal as Tesla entry nears

The US is seeking India to eliminate car import tariffs under a proposed trade deal, but India is hesitant to immediately do so, despite considering further cuts. India's high auto tariffs will be discussed in formal talks for the bilateral trade deal, which is yet to begin. This is paving the way for Tesla, an American electric vehicle maker, preparing for an India launch. *(Business Standard)*

India's small exporters seek import duty cuts to counter US steel, aluminium tariffs

India's small engineering goods exporters advocate for reduced import tariffs on select U.S. goods to secure more favorable trade terms in light of President Trump's new steel and aluminum duties. Exporters fear these tariffs could significantly impact their shipment volumes and costs, necessitating governmental intervention for competitive support. *(The Economic Times)*

India restricts platinum alloy imports, except 99% pure

India has moved platinum alloy imports, except for 99% pure platinum alloys, to the restricted category, as announced in a government notification on Wednesday. This decision was made after some importers were disguising gold imports as platinum to bypass higher import duties. *(The Economic Times)*

India, European Union discuss efforts to accelerate FTA talks

India and the EU are accelerating efforts to finalize a free trade agreement by the end of the year. Key areas include duty cuts on specific goods and data security for India's IT sector. The agreement aims to enhance bilateral trade and investment, amidst concerns over potential US tariffs. *(The Economic Times)*

India’s tariffs WTO-compliant, exports to US have low local value add: GTRI

India’s exports to the US include products like iPhones and solar panels with low local value addition, leading to minimal economic gains for India. Think tank GTRI urges the government to ensure the US understands India's WTO-compliant import duties. With upcoming trade talks, India must strategize to avoid escalated trade tensions while explaining its tariff policies. *(The Economic Times)*

Agriculture and Rural Economy

Cotton Productivity Mission may take off in 4-5 months

The Mission for Cotton Productivity, announced in the Union Budget, is set to launch in four to five months. The mission, costing ₹2,500 crore over five years, will have three mini missions. The first will improve cotton yield and productivity for farmers, while the second, backed by the Cotton Corporation of India, will modernize 1,000 ginning and pressing units. The third will promote sustainable natural fibres like banana, milkweed, and bamboo. *(The Hindu)*

Union Budget 2025-26: Efforts made to revitalise agri, rural economy

India's agriculture sector is experiencing growth, but food inflation and wage stagnation remain issues. The Union Budget introduces initiatives like Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana, but implementation remains crucial. A draft National Policy on Agricultural Marketing proposes a state-level reform committee. Sustained efforts are essential for Viksit Bharat 2047. *(Business Standard)*

Rice procurement up 5% in Oct-Feb 2024-25

India's rice procurement reached 45.84 million tonnes as of February 28, a 5% increase from the previous year. However, this exceeds 38% of output, potentially affecting the government's budget. Bihar's procurement reached 2.63 million tonnes, Uttar Pradesh's reached 3.86 million tonnes, and Madhya Pradesh's reached 2.92 million tonnes. *(The Hindu)*

Govt must curb import of pulses

The government has reimposed import duty on yellow peas after allowing duty-free imports since December 2023, while duty-free imports of pigeon peas (tur) continue until March 2026. A decision on lentils (masoor), chickpeas (chana), and urad is pending. Concerns arise as domestic pulse prices remain below MSP, with chickpea prices falling sharply. Imports have surged, with India bringing in over 6.63 million tonnes of pulses in 2024, including significant shipments from Australia and Canada. *(The Hindu)*

First survey pegs wheat crop at 110 mt

Wheat production in the 2024-25 crop year is expected to rise by 8.2% to 109.85 million tonnes, driven by higher acreage and climate-resilient varieties, according to AgriWatch. This aligns with RFMFI's 110 mt estimate, though lower than the Agriculture Ministry's 113.29 mt projection for 2024. Favorable rainfall in key wheat-growing areas has supported the crop despite warmer February weather. *(The Hindu)*

'Forward trade bleeding pulses sector'

Forward trading has caused the pulses trade to "bleed" and deals to be struck, defying market balance and fundamentals, according to traders and experts at a virtual Agriculture Roundtable on Pulses. Hiten Kataria, Partner of Sunraj Group, reassured traders that they are not in a casino. *(The Hindu)*

Cotton Productivity Mission may take off in 4-5 months

The Mission for Cotton Productivity, announced in the Union Budget, is set to launch in four to five months. The mission, costing ₹2,500 crore over five years, will have three mini missions. The first will improve cotton yield and productivity for farmers, while the second, backed by the Cotton Corporation of India, will modernize 1,000 ginning and pressing units. The third will promote sustainable natural fibres like banana, milkweed, and bamboo. *(The Hindu)*

Kashmir university has a plan to help farmers manage a dry summer

From seed distribution to crop calendars, the Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (SKUAST) has an action plan to tackle the dry conditions it expects in Kashmir this summer.Kashmir has had a dry winter this year, with the months of January and February recording a rainfall deficit of around 80%. Even though the weather department had forecast a wet spell until February 28, there has also been a significant shortfall of snow in Kashmir, plus the attendant consequences.
(The Hindu)

Cabinet okays supply of generic veterinary medicines at affordable rates under Livestock Health program

The Cabinet has approved modifications to the Livestock Health and Disease Control Programme, allocating Rs 75 crore for distributing affordable, high-quality generic veterinary medicines under the new Pashu Aushadhi component. These medicines will be distributed through PM Kisan Samridhi Kendras and cooperatives, aiming to support farmers. Traditional veterinary medicine knowledge will also be documented and revived. *(The Economic Times)*

Implement budgetary proposals fast for agri and rural development: Modi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday called for an expeditious implementation of the budgetary proposals for agriculture and rural development, while stressing on the need to achieve self-sufficiency in pulses output. Modi said that the government is working towards two big goals simultaneously — the development of the agriculture sector and the prosperity of villages. To harness the potential of the agriculture sector, he said that the Budget has announced the PM Dhan Dhanya Krishi Yojana, focusing on the development of the 100 least productive agricultural districts. *(Financial Express)*

Industry, Manufacturing, Services and Technology

Auto component industry sets $100-b export target in 7-8 years

The Indian auto component industry has taken an ambitious target of reaching $100 billion in the next seven-eight years (currently at $21.2 billion in FY24) in exports. For achieving this, the country needs to position itself as a hub for both classic and emerging auto components, Automotive Component Manufacturers Association of India (ACMA) said. *(BusinessLine)*

States need to protect patients from being fleeced by private hospitals, says SC

The Supreme Court on Tuesday directed States to consider framing guidelines to ensure patients are not "exploited" or compelled by private hospitals to buy medicines, implants, consumables and medical devices at inflated prices from their own pharmacies or outlets. The court, at the same time, cautioned the States from taking a hard line while formulating the guidelines that would affect private investment in the health sector. *(The Hindu)*

Designing India's AI Safety Institute

India's Artificial Intelligence (AI) ambitions took a significant leap forward when Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw announced that the country would launch an indigenous AI model and establish an AI Safety Institute (AISI) under the Safe and Trusted Pillar of the IndiaAI Mission. Rather than relying on rigid regulations that may quickly become outdated, governments worldwide are establishing AISIs to address potential AI risks. Since 2023, the U.K., the U.S., Singapore, and Japan, among others, are setting up AISIs. *(The Hindu)*

India to become 2nd largest market for Zoho's ManageEngine, with 30% growth in cloud solutions

India will become the second largest market for ManageEngine, a division of Zoho Corp, by the end of 2025, said Arun Kumar, Regional Director. "India was not even in the top 10 countries earlier but today we are number three in terms of primary market. By the end of this year or next year, we'll move to number two. We cut across close to 7,500 enterprises in India, across different industry verticals, BFSI, public sector, healthcare, education, IT and ITES, with major market revenue coming in from Mumbai, NCR, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Tamil Nadu,". *(BusinessLine)*

Reciprocal tariffs may not hit automobile sector in a big way

There will not be much impact on the Indian automobile industry if the US government applies reciprocal tariffs on automobiles as very few vehicles are going to the country from India. According to experts tracking the sector, there is no threat to the Indian auto industry from the US's reciprocal tariff but other countries may also raise questions if India comes to an understanding with the US specifically on lowering tariffs. *(BusinessLine)*

News on Kerala

All palliative care initiatives come under one roof

Kerala's Chief Minister, Pinarayi Vijayan, has launched the 'Kerala care' palliative care grid, aiming to consolidate all palliative-care initiatives in the state under one umbrella. The grid will include patient registration, registration of voluntary organizations, and training of new volunteers. It will also allow the public to choose their preferred palliative care services. Dashboards will be integrated into the grid, allowing for review of palliative care activities at various levels. The Health department has set up the grid through Digital University Kerala. *(The Hindu)*

A battle between fishing and mining

Kerala coastal communities are facing unrest due to the Centre's plans for offshore mining, which they fear will harm the marine ecosystem and disrupt their traditional way of life. Opposition intensified after an amendment to the Offshore Areas Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act, 2002, leading to protests and demonstrations by fishers, prompting the formation of the Kerala Fisheries Coordination Committee. *(The Hindu)*

Assembly passes resolution against deep-sea mining

The Kerala Assembly on Tuesday unanimously passed a resolution opposing the Union government's plans to permit offshore mining along the State's coast. The resolution, presented by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, expressed grave concerns over the amendments to the Offshore Areas Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act, 2002, which allowed private participation in deep-sea mineral exploration and mining. *(The Hindu)*

Kerala Financial Corporation standalone net profit declines 24.65% in the december 2024 quarter

Net profit of Kerala Financial Corporation declined 24.65% to Rs 62.07 crore in the quarter ended December 2024 as against Rs 82.38 crore during the previous quarter ended December 2023. Sales declined 0.95% to Rs 206.69 crore in the quarter ended December 2024 as against Rs 208.68 crore during the previous quarter ended December 2023. *(Business Standard)*

Foreign companies in India: Kerala gets 4 in 5 yrs, better than Bihar

Kerala's recent push for foreign investment is justified, as only four foreign companies were registered during the current government's tenure, according to data from the Rajya Sabha. Kerala ranks fourth in the country in terms of foreign companies registered in the past five years, trailing Delhi, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Gujarat, Haryana, Telangana, and Uttar Pradesh. *(onmanorama)*

Lowest MSME closure rate in Kerala: Rajeeve

Kerala has the lowest rate of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) closure at 12%, according to Industries Minister P. Rajeeve. He defended the low rate, stating that it has significantly decreased since the launch of the State government's Year of Entrepreneurship programme. The closure rate dropped from 15% in the first year to 9% in the second, bringing the average closure rate since the scheme's launch to 12%. *(The Hindu)*

Vizhinjam port generates ₹32 crore tax for Kerala, ₹181 crore revenue for AVPPL

The Kerala government has received a sum of ₹32.63 crore as tax from the Vizhinjam International Seaport by way of facilitating the berthing of 193 ships and handling 3.83 lakhs TEU cargo so far. According to the details presented in the Assembly on Tuesday, the port's operations have been progressing successfully to date since ships began calling at the port on a trial basis on July 11, 2024. *(The Hindu)*

GULATI INSTITUTE OF FINANCE AND TAXATION
GIFT Campus, Chavadimukku,
Sreekariyam, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala - 695017
Phone : 0471 2596970, 2596980, 2590880, 2593960
Fax : 0471 2591490
Email : giftkerala@gmail.com

GULATI INSTITUTE OF FINANCE AND TAXATION
An Autonomous Institution of Government of Kerala