



Public Finance

Union Budget to be presented on Sun, Feb 1, said LS Speaker Birla

Union Budget for Fiscal Year 2026-27 will be presented on Sunday, February 1, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said on Monday. It will be for the first time, when the budget will be presented on Sunday. (*BusinessLine*)

Union govt. releases ₹567.4 crore for healthcare sector in A.P.

The Union government released the fifth and final instalment of ₹567.4 crore to Andhra Pradesh for the current financial year, Minister for Health, Medical Education and Family Welfare Satya Kumar Yadav has said. According to an official release on Tuesday, the funds are part of the ₹2,600-crore grant allocated by the 15th Finance Commission for the development of the healthcare sector in the State. (*The Hindu*)

Finance Ministry launches ₹20 lakh Paripoorna Mediclaim Ayush Bima for CGHS beneficiaries

The finance ministry on Wednesday launched the Paripoorna Mediclaim Ayush Bima for beneficiaries of the Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS). This optional health insurance plan will be available as a retail product for all CGHS beneficiaries, the finance ministry said in a statement. The policy provides indemnity-based in-patient hospitalisation coverage within India, with sum insured options of Rs 10 lakh or Rs 20 lakh. (*BusinessLine*)

India's state finances face headwinds in FY26, says CareEdge report

Indian states' fiscal health is under strain in fiscal year 2025-26 (FY26), with moderating revenue growth colliding with a likely acceleration in capital expenditure (capex), casting doubts on their ability to meet budgeted deficit targets, according to a new CareEdge analysis of 22 states that represent 94 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP). "While capex trends so far this year remain broadly in line with historical patterns, capital spending typically accelerates in the closing months of the fiscal year. (*Business Standard*)

Pre-Budget meet: States push for equitable funds, higher deficit limits

Chief Minister Pramod Sawant has sought a more equitable Centre-state funding pattern under centrally sponsored schemes, taking into account Goa's coastal challenges, Western Ghats ecology, and national tourism responsibilities. Sawant attended the pre-budget Meeting for the Union Budget 2026-27, chaired by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in New Delhi on Saturday. Finance ministers of various states and Union Territories and other senior officials participated in the meeting. (*Business Standard*)

UP emerges as highest funded state under SASCI

As states hope for more funds under the 'Scheme for Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI)' in the forthcoming Budget, Uttar Pradesh emerged as the state that got the highest amount of funds as yet, followed by Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra and Assam. The scheme is a combination of tied (reform measures undertaken by states/UTs) and untied (proposals forwarded by states/UTs) funding. *(BusinessLine)*



Taxation

Securities transaction tax collection likely to miss Budget target

The regulatory tightening of Futures and Options (F&O) trading, among other factors, led to a decline in securities transaction tax (STT) collections. Should current trends persist, revenue is expected to fall short of Budget estimates, a scenario not seen since FY20. Data made public by the Income Tax Department show that STT collection was around ₹44,500 crore as on January 11. Meeting Budget estimates will require a collection of over ₹33,400 crore in the remaining 79 days, a target that appears increasingly challenging. *(BusinessLine)*

Net direct tax collection grows 8.82% to Rs 18.38 lakh crore till January 11

India's net direct tax collections rose 8.82 percent to Rs 18.38 lakh crore from April 1 to January 11, official data showed. This included corporate tax of Rs 8.63 lakh crore and Non Corporate tax of Rs 9.39 lakh crore. According to the government data, total refunds issued as on January 11 was Rs 3.11 lakh crore, down by 16.92% against the same period last year. *(The Economic Times)*

Union Budget 2026: Govt should refrain from hiking income tax surcharge on super-rich, experts say

Union Budget 2026: The government should refrain from raising income tax surcharge on the super-rich and reintroducing wealth tax in the upcoming 2026-27 Budget, as the move could prompt persons in high-income brackets to leave the country for low-tax jurisdictions, according to tax experts. Currently, a surcharge on income tax is payable by high-income individuals with earnings above Rs 50 lakh. A 10 percent surcharge is levied on income between Rs 50 lakh and Rs 1 crore, 15 percent (Rs 1-2 crore), and 25 percent (Rs 2-5 crore). *(The Economic Times)*

61,000 crorepati taxpayers added in last one year

India added 61,000 new crorepati taxpayers in the last one year, taking the total number of individuals with taxable income of ₹1 crore or more to 351,000, buoyed by better tax compliance. The expansion is even sharper at the very top. The exclusive super-rich club-those with taxable income exceeding ₹10 crore-now counts 12,660 members, after adding roughly 2,800 individuals during the year, an analysis of income tax returns (ITRs) data filed up to January 1 for the assessment year 2025-26 reveals. *(The Economic Times)*

Income tax refund complaints piling up

Less than 15 percent of complaints against the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) were resolved during the first 8 days of January, data from CPGRAMS (Centralized Public Grievance Redress And Monitoring System) show. Although the exact nature of the complaints is not known, it is widely believed that most of the complaints are related to refunds, as social media is flooded with grievances about delays in getting Income Tax refunds despite filing the returns on time. *(BusinessLine)*



National Accounts and State of the Economy

Wholesale inflation climbs to eight-month high of 0.83% in December

India's factory-gate inflation, as measured by the wholesale price index (WPI), climbed to an eight-month high of 0.83 percent in December snapping a two-month deflationary streak, according to data released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry on Wednesday. *(Business Standard)*

India WPI inflation rebounds to 0.83% in December

India's wholesale price inflation rebounded to 0.83% year-on-year in December 2025, reversing a contraction in November. This marked the first increase in three months and the strongest pace since April, driven primarily by firmer manufacturing costs. Manufacturing inflation accelerated to 1.82%, led by higher prices of food products, pharmaceuticals, and cement-related items. Food prices stabilized after a sharp decline in November. *(Business Standard)*

CPI inflation 2011-12 series: End of an era as new base begins next month

The NSO on Monday released the final print of CPI-based inflation for December under the 2012 base year. From next month, a new CPI series begins with 2024 as the base year. An analysis of the headline inflation data shows that inflation eased over the 2012-base series, peaking at 11.16 percent in November 2013 and falling to a low of 0.25 percent in October 2025. *(Business Standard)*

Government projects slower GDP growth

The government expects the country's gross domestic product (GDP) to grow at a slower pace of 5% for the full year 2019-20, as compared to 6.8% in the previous year, according to the first advance estimates released by the Statistics Ministry on Tuesday. This estimate is in line with projections made by the Reserve Bank of India, which had revised GDP growth downwards to 5% for 2019-20 from 6.1% during its October policy. *(The Hindu)*

India a key driver of global growth, says IMF spokesperson

India continues to remain a key growth engine for the global economy, with its economic performance staying strong and resilient, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF). IMF spokesperson Julie Kozack, who also heads the Communications Department at the IMF said "India is a key growth engine for the world." She said "We had estimated

India's growth for fiscal year 2025-2026 at 6.6%, which is based on strong consumption growth. What we have seen since then is that the third-quarter growth in India came out stronger than expected, and we will be upgrading our forecast going forward. *(The Hindu)*

India's power sector offers \$500 billion investment potential over next seven years: Manohar Lal

As per our estimates, India has an investment potential of about half a trillion U.S. dollars over the next seven years, said Union Minister of Power Manohar Lal on Thursday (January 15, 2026). speaking at the curtain raiser event in the run-up to the Bharat Electricity Summit (2026), the Union Power Minister elaborated that India holds an investment potential of about \$346 billion in electricity generation, \$68.2 billion in transmission and distribution, and another \$35.2 billion in energy storage. *(The Hindu)*

Exports rise 1.87% to \$38.5 billion in December: Commerce Secretary

The country's merchandise exports rose 1.87% to \$38.5 billion in December 2025, Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal said on Thursday (January 15, 2026). Imports increased to \$63.55 billion in December 2025 from \$58.43 billion a year ago. The trade deficit stood at \$25 billion during the month under review. *(The Hindu)*

Rupee recovers 11 paise to 90.12 against U.S. dollar in early trade

The rupee rebounded from low levels and gained 11 paise to trade at 90.12 against the U.S. dollar in early deals on Wednesday (January 14, 2026), tracking lower crude oil prices and retreating American currency overseas. Domestic equity markets also showed resilience even as traders stayed cautious, watching geopolitical developments and awaiting U.S. inflation numbers that are expected to provide cues for the Federal Reserve's policy move, forex analysts said. *(The Hindu)*

Stock markets trade flat amid volatile trends

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty encountered heavy volatility in early trade on Wednesday (January 14, 2026), with investors staying on the sidelines amid persistent foreign fund outflows and global tariff-related uncertainties. The 30-share BSE Sensex declined 53.88 points to 83,573.11 in early trade. The 50-share NSE Nifty dipped 16.55 points to 25,719.25. From the 30-Sensex firms, Asian Paints, Tata Consultancy Services, Bajaj Finserv, InterGlobe Aviation, Sun Pharma and UltraTech Cement were among the biggest laggards. *(The Hindu)*



Banking and Monetary Policy

RBI's new upper layer list could include NBFCs promoted by banks, strong promoters

The Reserve Bank of India is likely to issue its updated list of upper layer non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) by mid-2026, sources say, and could add large NBFCs promoted by banks and strong promoters in the list. NBFCs that could potentially be

added to the list include Credila Financial Services (formerly promoted by HDFC Bank), Axis Finance promoted by Axis Bank, Kotak Mahindra Prime backed by Kotak Mahindra Bank, Can Fin Homes backed by Canara Bank, ICICI Home Finance promoted by ICICI Bank, Sundaram finance, Hero Fincorp, Poonawalla Fincorp and Hinduja Leyland Finance. Except ICICI Home and Can Fin Homes, all other NBFCs have assets under management (AUM) upwards of ₹40,000 crore as of September-end. (*BusinessLine*)

Deposits and advances expanded manifold over two decades, says SBI research

Bank deposits and advances expanded manifold over two decades (FY05 to FY25), with deposits rising from ₹18.4 lakh crore to ₹241.5 lakh crore and advances from ₹11.5 lakh crore to ₹191.2 lakh crore, signalling scale expansion of the banking system, according to a report by SBI's Economic Research Department (ERD). (*BusinessLine*)

RBI asks banks to meet forex risk capital norms on continuous basis

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday proposed changes to the manner in which banks calculate their net foreign exchange exposure and maintain capital for foreign exchange risk. "A bank shall compute net open position and maintain capital charge for foreign exchange risk at both the group/consolidated level and the solo/standalone level," the apex bank said. (*Business Standard*)

Bank credit to grow 13% in FY27 despite high LDR constraints: Ind-Ra

Bank credit in India is expected to grow 13 per cent year-on-year (YoY) in the next financial year (FY27), largely driven by improved consumption demand due to GST rationalisation and lower inflation. Capital expenditure disbursements in the coming quarters will also support credit offtake, according to India Ratings. (*Business Standard*)

Banks must ensure year-round operational discipline: RBI deputy governor

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Deputy Governor Swaminathan J has asked banks to put in place stronger operational discipline and data governance throughout the year, as supervision needs to shift from periodic snapshots to continuous awareness. Speaking on 'Issues and Challenges in Banking Supervision in the Digital Era', the deputy governor said for decades, supervisors were trained to read balance sheets and inspect processes, and it is still being done the same way. (*Business Standard*)

RBI's likely to hold interest rates with inflation set to rise

Economists anticipate the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will introduce more money into the financial system. With inflation expected to rise, interest rates are likely to stay the same in upcoming policy meetings. This means attention will shift to how much money the RBI will add and when it will do so. (*The Economic Times*)

RBI tightens forex risk norms, aligns capital rules with global standards

The Reserve Bank of India has introduced new banking rules for calculating foreign exchange risk capital charges, aiming for international alignment. Banks will now compute these requirements continuously at consolidated and standalone levels, with changes effective April 1, 2027. The RBI also allows exclusion of specific 'structural' foreign exchange positions under strict conditions. (*The Economic Times*)

New forex risk capital rules from April 2027

RBI has proposed significant changes to how banks manage their foreign exchange exposure. These updates aim to align Indian regulations with global Basel standards, simplifying calculations by merging offshore and onshore positions. The move also includes treating gold separately and exempting certain structural forex holdings, ensuring consistent application across all financial institutions. *(The Economic Times)*



External Sector

U.S. tariff threat puts India-Iran ties, BRICS plans under strain

India's trade with Iran declined significantly after 2019 following U.S. sanctions against that country, while overall trade levels have been small. India's overall trade scenario is not likely to face much of an impact if it were to stop trading with Iran in response to U.S. President Donald Trump's new threat of a 25% tariff on any country doing business with Iran, official data showed. However, it could temporarily impact some sectors such as rice, tea, fresh fruits, and essential oils, as per the data. *(The Hindu)*

Rice exports surge to near record in 2025 as curbs lifted

India's rice exports jumped 19.4% last year to the second-highest on record after New Delhi lifted all export curbs, making shipments more competitive, government and industry officials told Reuters. An improved flow of rice from the world's largest exporter of the grain curbed shipments from rivals Thailand and Vietnam and drove prices in Asia to their lowest in nearly a decade, easing costs for poor consumers in Africa and other regions. *(The Hindu)*

Shifting away from Russian oil imports currently won't hurt India fiscally

The prevailing low global oil prices mean that, if India chooses to shift away from importing Russian oil and switches to more oil from the U.S., the financial impact of this would be limited, according to experts as well an analysis of India's import data. An analysis by The Hindu of the volume and value of India's oil imports show that in November 2025, the latest month for which there is data, India imported oil from Russia at the rate of \$482.7 per tonne. That month, oil imports from the U.S. cost \$523.3 per tonne. On average, India paid \$498.8 per tonne for its oil imports in November 2025. *(The Hindu)*

Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu top performers in Niti Aayog's export preparedness index 2024

Maharashtra has topped NITI Aayog's Export Preparedness Index (2024) in the large States category followed by Tamil Nadu and Gujarat in the second and third places respectively. Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir and Nagaland bagged the top three spots among small States, North East and Union Territories. The report was released by NITI Aayog CEO BVR Subrahmanyam. *(BusinessLine)*

India's crude imports drop to lowest levels since first price cap as RIL cuts cargoes by half, says CREA

The recent sanctions by the US on Russia have started taking effect, with India's December 2025 crude oil imports from Moscow slipping to their lowest levels for the first time since G7 countries imposed the \$60 per barrel price cap on Urals grade (December 2022) as Reliance Industries (RIL) halved its cargoes. Another first is Turkey displacing India as Russia's second-largest fossil fuel buyer in almost three years. Finland-based Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) said, "India's Russian crude imports recorded a sharp 29 percent m-o-m reduction to the lowest volumes since implementation of the price cap policy. This drop occurred despite total imports growing marginally". (*BusinessLine*)

Iran crisis leaves Indian tea exporters worried as shipments get held up

Indian tea exporters are worried about the Iran crisis as shipments to the country, a major overseas market, have been halted due to a total breakdown in communication with importers. Iran is mostly a premium quality orthodox tea market, where Assam orthodox tea finds its place in many Iranian brands. As of now, there is absolutely no contact with Iran. All phone lines have been lost. So, trouble is an understatement as of now. We will only know what the issue is once we start talking to our clients there. The situation is definitely not good, said Anish Bhansali, partner of Bhansali & Co, a major tea exporter to Iran. (*BusinessLine*)

India overhauls customs duty rules to help exporters and smaller businesses

India has updated customs rules to treat postal exports like regular cargo, simplifying incentive claims for small businesses and exporters. This change allows electronic export entries for postal shipments to be recognized for duty drawback, RoDTEP, and RoSCTL schemes. New electronic Postal Bill of Export forms have also been introduced for e-commerce and other postal shipments. (*The Economic Times*)

After 41-month high, Trump's tariffs drag India's export growth in December

India Export Data: India's trade deficit grew in December as exports slowed. Despite challenges, overall outbound shipments saw modest growth. Diversification strategies are deepening trade ties with West Asia, Europe, and other regions. Services exports also saw a contraction. Government initiatives are supporting exporters, with positive growth expected in goods and services trade for the fiscal year. (*The Economic Times*)

Textiles & apparel exports fall in first three quarters of FY26

Indian textile and apparel exports saw a slight dip in the first nine months of FY26. Textile shipments declined, while apparel exports showed growth. Restrictions in Bangladesh and market uncertainties in the US impacted yarn and fabric sales. Some exporters offered discounts to maintain sales volumes. Companies heavily reliant on the US for home textiles faced significant challenges. (*The Economic Times*)

India's exports rise 1.8% to \$38.51 bn in Dec; trade deficit widens

India's merchandise exports rose 1.8 percent year-on-year to \$38.51 billion in December amid global economic uncertainties, according to data released by the commerce department. Inbound shipments grew 8.8 percent to \$63.55 billion. The trade deficit widened to \$25 billion, compared with \$20.63 billion in December 2024 and \$24.53

billion in November. Exports to the US contracted 1.8 percent to \$6.89 billion in December. However, on a cumulative basis, outbound shipments to the US stood at \$65.87 billion during April–December, marking 9.7 percent growth over the same period last year. (*Business Standard*)

Smartphone exports may have topped \$30 billion in 2025 on PLI push

In a record-breaking showing, smartphone exports from India—driven by the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme—are likely to have reached \$30 billion over the 12 months from January to December 2025, accounting for 38 percent of the country's total smartphone exports over the past five years since 2021. Between 2021 and 2025, India's smartphone exports reached nearly \$80 billion (\$79.03 billion), with the latest year delivering the highest exports recorded in any 12-month period. (*Business Standard*)



Agriculture and Rural Economy

India's rabi sowing area exceeds normal acreage, up 3% from last year

With a coverage of about 10 lakh hectares (lh) in the past week, the overall acreage of rabi crops reached 644.29 lh as of January 9, which is 2.8 percent higher than 626.64 lh a year ago. The area has exceeded the winter season's average 637.81 lh, the government said on Monday. Wheat sowing seems completed with no progress reported in the past week as acreage remained at 334.17 lh, the same as on January 2. Last year, the acreage of wheat was at a record high of 328.04 lh, which led to a new high in production at 117.94 million tonnes (mt). (*BusinessLine*)

Farmers received 9-30% below MSPs for major Kharif crops during Oct-Dec period

Barring paddy, all other kharif crops ruled 9-30 per cent below their respective minimum support prices (MSPs) during the key harvesting period October-December, according to official data. Even as low prices contributed to lower GVA of the agri sector, this has not deterred farmers, who expanded the area under rabi crops by 3 per cent this season mostly under wheat. According to official data compiled by the Agmarknet portal, all-India weighted average rate of paddy (common) was ₹2,407 per quintal during October-December 2025—about 1 percent higher from its MSP of ₹2,389/quintal. (*BusinessLine*)

Rural development needs people, not just funds

Rural India does not suffer from a shortage of public funds, but from a shortage of sustained local capacity. Despite large allocations, ₹1.32 lakh crore for agriculture, ₹86,000 crore for MGNREGA and ₹33,919 crore in a State like Odisha, schemes often fail to translate into higher productivity or incomes. Official reviews count assets and beneficiaries, not outcomes. Agriculture and allied sectors need continuous, local, practice-based support, which overstretched line departments cannot provide. A modest solution is a national cadre of village-based para-professionals, Dharti-Putras trained to support farming, livestock, water management and small enterprises. (*BusinessLine*)

Seeds Bill finalised, likely to be introduced in Budget session

The government is expected to introduce the Seeds Bill, 2026 in the Lok Sabha during the Budget session starting January 28, with no major changes from the draft released in November 2025. The Bill seeks to replace the outdated Seeds Act, 1966 and regulate seed quality, curb spurious seeds, and liberalise imports. A key provision mandates compulsory registration of seed manufacturers, which the government says will prevent fraud, but critics warn it could marginalise small players and favour large firms. The draft proposes fines from ₹50,000 to ₹30 lakh, while decriminalising minor offences. Farmer groups, including the Samyukt Kisan Morcha, have opposed the Bill, alleging it ignores seed affordability, timely availability and price regulation, and allows import of foreign seeds based on self-certification. (*BusinessLine*)

Budget 2026: Agri sector pitches for tech push, climate-smart infrastructure

With the Budget 2026 on the horizon, leaders in the agriculture sector are rallying for a substantial increase in investments directed towards digital infrastructure, climate-smart practices, and technological advancements. They argue that these enhancements are crucial for elevating productivity levels and generating new job opportunities. (*The Economic Times*)

Wheat output likely to exceed last year's record 117.94 mn tonne: Agriculture Minister

India's wheat output is poised to break last year's record, with Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan anticipating a bumper harvest. Higher acreage and favorable weather conditions are credited for the positive outlook. Director General of ICAR, M L Jat, highlighted strong crop conditions and timely sowing, projecting production to potentially reach 120 million tonnes. (*The Economic Times*)

Budget 2026: Why do India's farms suddenly matter?

India Budget 2026: India's agriculture, despite its challenges, holds immense potential as a global growth engine amidst shifting trade dynamics. Lessons from the shrimp export crisis highlight the power of market diversification and value addition. Budget 2026-27 can unlock this 'power-lifter' role by investing in agri-logistics and predictable trade policies, transforming a managed sector into a strategic asset. (*The Economic Times*)



Industry, Manufacturing, Services and Technology

Indian auto industry sees growth momentum extending into 2026

The automobile industry expects the positive momentum to continue well into 2026, supported by stable macroeconomic conditions, improving affordability and continued policy support, while it will continue to monitor geopolitical developments to ensure resilience in supply chain and export volumes. Sharing monthly sales data, Shailesh Chandra, President, Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), said 2025 was a landmark year. (*BusinessLine*)

Indian luxury car market to remain flat in 2026: Mercedes-Benz India CEO

Despite a 6 percent reduction in GST, a top official noted that economic headwinds, particularly foreign exchange (forex) depreciation, continue to weigh on growth. As per industry estimates, the luxury car market in India grew by around 2 percent in calendar year (CY) 2025 to around 52,100 units as compared with around 51,200 units in CY 2024. The market had crossed 50,000 units for the first time in CY 2024. Recently, the BMW Group India had declared its sales numbers that grew by 14.4 percent year-on-year in CY 2025 to 18,001 units as compared with 15,723 units in CY 2024. *(BusinessLine)*

India's textiles sector attracts over ₹60,000 crore investment in 2025

The textiles sector saw commitments and investments of over ₹60,000 crore in 2025, said government officials. They hope the trend will continue in the current year too. Talking about the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme, the official said 85 companies had applied under the revamped scheme, with potential investments of over ₹20,000 crore. On the FDI front, there have been a number of proposals. *(BusinessLine)*

Solar cells of efficiencies above 30%

High-efficiency cells are the next frontier of the solar industry. In India, the sector has come a long way since its beginnings in 2010, when the National Solar Mission was launched. It took the industry eight years to set up 20 GW of manufacturing capacity; in the next eight, it added 100 GW. This was possible mainly because China hammered down module prices — modules account for 55–60 per cent of the cost of a solar plant. But cost efficiency arising from improvements in cell efficiency (cells are assembled into modules) also played a significant role. *(BusinessLine)*

Will develop appropriate, robust regulatory framework for mobile security: MeitY

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has said that it is conducting routine stakeholder consultations on safety and security requirements, with continuous engagement with industry on security standards, after which it would develop an appropriate and robust regulatory framework for mobile security. *(BusinessLine)*

India and the next Kondratiev wave

Every few decades, the global economy reshapes itself decisively. New technologies rise, old industries fade and economic leadership shifts. Nearly a century ago, economist Nikolai Kondratiev described these moments as long waves of growth, each lasting 40-60 years and driven by clusters of transformative technologies. As the digital economy matures and a new convergence of frontier technologies gathers pace, another wave is possibly taking shape. This time, India appears well positioned to ride it. *(BusinessLine)*



New year, new government and a vision transforming Kerala into the finest place to live and work

As Kerala prepares for a newly elected government in 2026, it is timely to reflect on the State's development path for the next 25 years. While India has witnessed rapid transformation since 2000 with sharp GDP growth, population expansion, and rising global economic stature Kerala has not fully converted its early social advantages into sustained economic dynamism. The State now faces worrying trends such as talent out-migration, weak capital inflows, and dependence on remittances rather than domestic value creation. Addressing this requires a renewed development vision centred on clean and safe infrastructure encompassing scientific waste management, healthy urban planning, safe transport, clean water, food safety, and disaster resilience alongside a decisive focus on talent creation, retention, and deployment through autonomous, excellence-driven education and strong investment in technology-oriented research and innovation. ([onmanorama.com](https://www.onmanorama.com))

Crookshanks digs up tax frauds in Kerala

The Kerala State GST Department has adopted an imaginative approach to naming tax-evasion raids, drawing inspiration from fictional worlds such as *The Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien and the *Harry Potter* novels by J.K. Rowling. Operations like *Crookshanks*, *Honeydukes*, *Prancing Pony*, and *Arkenstone* named after characters or locations in these stories have accompanied major enforcement actions uncovering large-scale turnover suppression across catering, hospitality, jewellery, and other sectors. Chosen in-house for creativity and recall, these names coexist with more cryptic titles such as *Fuego Marino* and *Rare Raccoon*. Since the 2023 restructuring of the State GST Department, such inspections led by enforcement and intelligence wings have become a regular tool to boost revenue and curb tax evasion. ([The Hindu](https://www.thehindu.com))

Kerala Startup Mission launches campaign to woo talents back home

Aimed at bringing talent back home and create job opportunities, Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM) has launched a campaign called "Thirike" for IT and non-IT professionals working outside Kerala who wish to return to the State for better prospects. To facilitate this, a database of professionals interested in returning to Kerala will be compiled through a digital survey. ([BusinessLine](https://www.businessline.com))

Oil traders seek Kerala govt intervention as copra prices rule firm despite heavy arrivals

The Cochin Oil Merchants Association (COMA) has sought the intervention of the State government to rein in copra prices, which continue to show an upward trend despite heavy arrivals from both domestic markets and imports. President of COMA, alleged that traders in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka are holding stocks to create an artificial supply crunch. This, he said, has led to a perceived shortage of copra and is affecting the production requirements of several small-scale units. There are heavy arrivals of copra

in the market, both imported and domestically produced, while demand for coconut oil remains subdued, Mahmood said. ([BusinessLine](#))

Kerala gets 4 new trains, including 3 Amrit Bharat services; PM Modi to flag it off next week

The Indian Railways has cleared four new services for Kerala, including three Amrit Bharat trains, ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to The Modi's visit to Thiruvananthapuram next week. The Prime Minister is set to inaugurate a total of six new trains, comprising the four allotted to Kerala and two earmarked for Tamil Nadu. ([mathrubhumi.com](#))

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



Disclaimer: This compilation on important news items relating to Finance, Taxation and Indian economy by GIFT from various newspapers and e-resources aims at providing an update to our esteemed readers. GIFT does not guarantee the accuracy or validity of the information provided. It is not a commercial product and all the copyrights remain with those of the respective copyright holders. Images are sourced from the web.