



July 05, 2023 – Wednesday

## Economy

### Indian companies in 'good credit shape': S&P

S&P Global Ratings said on Tuesday that Indian companies were in "good credit shape" due to strong growth in the country's economy and accommodative corporate balance sheets. "By our estimates, aggregate EBITDA in fiscal 2024 will be about 50% higher than five years back for rated corporate and infrastructure entities in India," S&P said in a note. "Yet aggregate debt is hardly changed, reflecting the improvement in credit quality." Rising domestic demand in India and recovery in sectors are more than offsetting negatives, including tough global economic conditions and higher policy and borrowing rates, S&P added.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/indian-companies-in-good-credit-shape-sp/articleshow/101479431.cms>

### Hiring up 12% Y-o-Y during January-May: Quess Corp's data

Hiring in the country witnessed a year-on-year growth of 12 per cent in January to May 2023 compared to the corresponding period of the previous year. The increase was driven by professional services, manufacturing, banking and financial services (BFSI), e-commerce, and IT/ITES sectors, according to Quess Corp data. Compared to last year, the professional services industry doubled its headcount, registering the highest growth, mainly due to companies increasingly seeking external expertise to expedite business operations while looking to tide over global turbulence. Roles across areas such as taxation, business consulting, risk advisory, deal advisory, technology services and ESG services saw good growth.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/hiring-up-12-y-o-y-during-january-may-quess-corps-data/article67041139.ece>

## Banking and Finance

### Market regulator SEBI mulls consolidated framework for cyber security

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) on Tuesday proposed a consolidated framework for cybersecurity, laying down a common structure for various regulated entities like stock exchanges, brokers, asset management companies and portfolio managers, among others. In a consultation paper, titled Consolidated Cybersecurity and Cyber Resilience Framework (CSCRF), the markets regulator said that the new framework would supersede nearly 15 circulars issued separately for various segments since 2015.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/market-regulator-sebi-mulls-consolidated-framework-for-cyber-security-123070400915\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/market-regulator-sebi-mulls-consolidated-framework-for-cyber-security-123070400915_1.html)

### FM to meet chiefs of PSB banks to review financial performance on Thursday

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is scheduled to meet chiefs of public sector banks (PSBs) on Thursday and review their financial performance. This is going to be the first review meeting after the 2022-23 financial results. In the last fiscal, PSBs together posted a record profit of Rs 1.04 lakh crore, with market leader State Bank of India (SBI) accounting for nearly half of the total earnings.

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/fm-to-meet-chiefs-of-psb-banks-to-review-financial-performance-on-thursday-123070400775\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/fm-to-meet-chiefs-of-psb-banks-to-review-financial-performance-on-thursday-123070400775_1.html)

#### **Banks told to push Rs 3L crore stuck budget home projects**

The government is nudging banks to engage more actively with the 'special window' it has set up to facilitate the completion of stuck real estate projects of more than Rs 3 lakh crore. So far, only two bank-funded projects have been taken up under the Special Window for Completion of Affordable and Mid-income Housing (SWAMIH) Investment Fund. "The government wants to fast-track the resolution of such stalled projects," said an official aware of the development, who did not wish to be identified. At least three rounds of meetings have been held with all stakeholders in the past two months to iron out any issues and ensure effective coordination.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/banking/finance/banking/banks-told-to-push-rs-3l-crore-stuck-budget-home-projects/articleshow/101495995.cms>

#### **States' debt cost continues to rise, nears 7.5%**

States continue to pay higher interest rates to investors for their debt, with the latest weighted average cost rising to 7.46 per cent at Tuesday's auctions wherein nine states raised Rs 16,200 crore. The weighted average cut-off/yield on state government securities (SGS) rose by 5 bps to 7.46 per cent in the auction held on Tuesday, from 7.41 per cent in the last weekly auction, despite a stable weighted average tenor of 16 years and the money raised was in line with the amount indicated for this week in the auction calendar, according to a note by Aditi Nayar, the chief economist at IcrA Ratings.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/finance/states-debt-cost-continues-to-rise-nears-7-5/articleshow/101492133.cms>

### **Industry**

#### **MCA to handle competition issues in digital markets; Meity to look at sector-specific, technical issues**

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) said on Tuesday that it would look into competition issues in digital markets while the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (Meity) will deal with sector-specific and technical issues. This draws a line between the responsibilities of the two government departments with respect to regulating digital intermediaries such as Facebook, Google, Twitter, etc. The MCA tweeted this after a meeting between its officials with those from Meity on the proposed digital competition law.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/tech/technology/mca-to-handle-competition-issues-in-digital-markets-meity-to-look-at-sector-specific-technical-issues/articleshow/101487116.cms>

#### **FSSAI to study WHO report on possible link between aspartame and cancer**

The Food Safety Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) will examine the World Health Organization's report which warns that artificial sweetener aspartame could be "possibly carcinogenic to humans", a senior official said. The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), WHO's cancer research arm, is expected to declare aspartame as a possible carcinogen, according to reports. "We will examine the report after we receive it," said a senior official of FSSAI, requesting not to be named. He said the authority is expected to get the report soon. Meanwhile, representatives of food companies said the report could mislead consumers into increasing the intake of sugar.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/food/fssai-to-study-who-report-on-possible-link-between-aspartame-and-cancer/articleshow/101496228.cms>

#### **SAIL crude steel output grows 8 per cent in Q1; sales rise 24 per cent**

State-owned SAIL on Tuesday reported an 8 per cent year-on-year growth in its crude steel production at 4.667 million tonnes (MT) during the first quarter of FY24. The company attained its highest-ever sales performance in the first quarter by achieving a sales volume of 3.9 MT, posting a y-o-y rise of 24 per cent.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/indl-goods/svs/steel/sail-crude-steel-output-grows-8-per-cent-in-q1-sales-rise-24-per-cent/articleshow/101494432.cms>

### **Infrastructure**

### **Cargo traffic at major ports declines 1.96% to 64.63 MT in June:IPA**

Cargo traffic at the country's major ports declined 1.96 per cent year-on-year to 64.63 million tonnes (MT) in June, with seven ports posting a negative growth while five such facilities saw a surge in traffic, an official release said on Tuesday. There are 12 major ports spanning across India under the administrative control of the central government. [https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/cargo-traffic-at-major-ports-declines-1-96-to-64-63-mt-in-june-ipa-123070400876\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/cargo-traffic-at-major-ports-declines-1-96-to-64-63-mt-in-june-ipa-123070400876_1.html)

### **First half of 2023 sees weak home sales as inflation crimps demand at the lower end**

Sales of homes showed a weak trend in the first half of 2023, with 1.57 lakh units sold in the top eight cities in the country, down 1.3 per cent year-on-year, Knight Frank India said in a report on the real estate sector. Mumbai, which accounted for over a fourth of the volume, saw the most decline at 8 per cent followed by Ahmedabad and Bengaluru. Launches rose about 8 per cent in January to June and sales as a percentage of launches were about 90 per cent in the period under review, compared to 99 per cent a year ago. Interestingly, inventory has been coming down with the number of quarters to sell falling to 6.7 from 7.8 a year ago. Unsold inventory at the end of June 2023 has seen a fall of 7 per cent from year ago. <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/real-estate/first-half-of-2023-sees-weak-home-sales-as-inflation-crimps-demand-at-the-lower-end/article67041488.ece>

## **Energy**

### **India mulls bilateral deals for green hydrogen-linked carbon credits**

India is considering bilateral agreements with countries such as Japan to allow them to use carbon credits linked to green hydrogen production in India in exchange for investment and purchase deals, two government sources and one industry source told Reuters. New Delhi this year approved a 174.9 billion rupee (\$2.13 billion) incentive plan to promote green hydrogen in a bid to cut carbon dioxide emissions and become a major exporter in the sector. [https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/india-mulls-bilateral-deals-for-green-hydrogen-linked-carbon-credits-123070400479\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/india-mulls-bilateral-deals-for-green-hydrogen-linked-carbon-credits-123070400479_1.html)

### **India's draft resolution on biofuels at MEPC referred to Working Group**

India's draft resolution on biofuels at the 80th session of the MEPC of International Maritime Organisation was on Tuesday referred to the Working Group for its consideration and finalisation. The draft Maritime Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) resolution put forward a biofuel certified by the International Certification Scheme to confirm the sustainability aspects in the Life Cycle Assessment guidelines are being assigned a CO2 emission conversion factor as zero. [https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/india-s-draft-resolution-on-biofuels-at-mepc-referred-to-working-group-123070400929\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/india-s-draft-resolution-on-biofuels-at-mepc-referred-to-working-group-123070400929_1.html)

### **ONGC Videsh awaiting clarity on equity structure over Kenyan oil field bid, says executive**

ONGC Videsh Ltd (OVL) is waiting for clarity on the equity structure of a block in the Lokichar basin in Kenya from Tullow Oil before bidding for a stake, a company executive said on Tuesday. Tullow in May said that its two minority partners have withdrawn from the field. Other Indian companies that are likely to partner with OVL for the stake buy are also evaluating a stake purchase, said the executive, who was not authorised to speak to the media. OVL is the overseas investment arm of state-run Oil and Natural Gas Corp. <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/ongc-videsh-awaiting-clarity-on-equity-structure-over-kenyan-oil-field-bid-says-executive/articleshow/101492963.cms>

### **PNGRB proposes Jammu-Srinagar natural gas pipeline**

The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) has proposed building a natural gas pipeline between Jammu and Srinagar to help meet the energy needs in the union territory of Jammu & Kashmir. The downstream regulator has begun a public consultation for the proposed pipeline and sought comments from all stakeholders within a month on the route as well as carrying capacity. The proposed pipeline will connect with Gurdaspur-Jammu natural gas pipeline and also receive gas through that.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/pngrb-proposes-jammu-srinagar-natural-gas-pipeline/articleshow/101496075.cms>

## Telecom

### Telecom department recasts vigilance mechanism, clips officers' wings

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has overhauled the vigilance setup, taking away the power of vigilance officers posted at 22 telecom circles to provide clearance to field officials. Instead, the vigilance clearance can now be undertaken at DoT's headquarters through a portal and the administrative unit concerned can provide the inputs. Further, four additional directors have been appointed in the vigilance wing and the chief vigilance officer (CVO) can assign any work to them. "Any complaint received in the field, will be transferred to CVO DoT for further decision. However, CVO DoT may seek assistance of officers in the field units on need basis, for preventive vigilance/investigation etc," according to a circular.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/telecom/telecom-news/telecom-department-recasts-vigilance-mechanism-clips-officers-wings/articleshow/101496220.cms>

## States

### Tamil Nadu's tariff revision for EV charging stations brings cheer to operators

State Electricity Regulator Tamil Nadu Electricity Regulatory Commission's revised energy tariff for public electric vehicle (EV) charging stations has brought relief to the charging station operators. The move is expected to accelerate investments in charging infrastructure and the adoption of battery-powered vehicles in the State. After last week's announcement to enable registration of battery-powered vehicles such as electric three-wheelers, e-taxis, and e-buses without permit fees, the restoration of power rates for charging stations to almost earlier levels is seen as another major step in boosting the EV ecosystem in Tamil Nadu.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/national/tamil-nadus-tariff-revision-for-ev-charging-stations-brings-cheer-to-operators/article67041764.ece>

### Haryana restaurants allowed to remain open 24x7

Restaurants in Haryana are now free to operate 24x7. Restaurants across the state can now be open round the clock, news agency IANS reported on July 4 citing an announcement by Haryana Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala. Restaurant owners, a while earlier, had approached the minister with a demand that the government should allow them to keep their restaurants open for 24 hours so that customers can avail their services as per their convenience. As reported by the news agency, a decision regarding this was reached at a meeting chaired by Chautala. The meeting was also attended Labour, Food and Civil Supplies Minister Anoop Dhanak, among others.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/hotels/-restaurants/haryana-restaurants-allowed-to-remain-open-24x7/articleshow/101492696.cms>

## External

### Food, fuel, fertiliser crisis big challenges for world: PM at SCO summit

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Tuesday in his address to the 23rd Summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Council of Heads of State said that food, fuel and fertilizer crisis is a big challenge for all countries in the world surrounded by controversies, tensions and epidemics. Addressing the summit via video conferencing PM Modi said that the SCO as an organization should consider how its efforts can meet the expectations and aspirations of people.

[https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/food-fuel-fertiliser-crisis-big-challenges-for-world-pm-at-sco-summit-123070400379\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/food-fuel-fertiliser-crisis-big-challenges-for-world-pm-at-sco-summit-123070400379_1.html)

### Women-led SMEs to benefit from proposed FTA with India: UK minister

Women-owned and women-led small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are set to benefit from a proposed India-UK free trade agreement (FTA) as part of a "Trade and Gender Equality" chapter which has been provisionally closed at the end of 10 rounds of negotiations, UK Business and Trade Secretary Kemi Badenoch has said. In response to the

House of Commons Business and Trade Committee, which scrutinises her department's work, the cabinet minister also revealed last week that short-term ease of business mobility and mutual recognition of professional qualifications were among the topics in discussion as part of the FTA.

[https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/women-led-smes-to-benefit-from-proposed-fta-with-india-uk-minister-123070400796\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/women-led-smes-to-benefit-from-proposed-fta-with-india-uk-minister-123070400796_1.html)

#### **Chinese imports cheaper as rupee gains over yuan**

India's inflation outlook, which faces upside risks from an uncertain monsoon prognosis, has gained an advantage from the economic struggles of neighbouring China, as a sharp appreciation in the rupee versus the yuan cheapens the price of imported goods. From March 31 to June 30, the rupee has appreciated 6% versus the Chinese currency, Bloomberg data showed. For the calendar year so far, the rupee's appreciation is at similar levels and taking into account the rupee's gains from its lows versus the yuan touched in January, the domestic currency has strengthened as much as 8%.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/chinese-imports-cheaper-as-rupee-gains-over-yuan/articleshow/101496003.cms>

#### **Govt's role in startup ecosystem is of facilitator, not regulator or administrator: Piyush Goyal**

Commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal on Tuesday said that the government's role for startups, is that of a facilitator and not a regulator. At the Startup20 Shikhar summit in Gurugram, he also said that it is undesirable for governments to start regulating or micromanaging the startup ecosystem. "Our role will always be of a facilitator. I don't see the government becoming an administrator or a regulator of this sector," Goyal said, adding that if at all there are issues, then the solutions would need to be found through self regulation.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/govts-role-in-startup-ecosystem-is-of-facilitator-not-regulator-or-administrator-piyush-goyal/articleshow/101487502.cms>

#### **India's June palm oil, soyoil imports jump on lower prices**

India's June palm oil imports jumped 49% from the previous month to their highest in three months as buyers took advantage of a dip in prices to their lowest in 28 months to increase purchases, six dealers told Reuters. A rebound in buying by the world's biggest vegetable oil importer would support Malaysian palm oil futures and help top producers Indonesia and Malaysia to trim inventories. Palm oil imports by India rose to 655,000 metric tons in June, up from 439,173 metric tons in May, according to average estimates from the dealers. May imports were the lowest since February 2021 as the tropical oil started trading at a premium to soyoil and sunflower oil over the past few months, prompting buyers to shift to the cheaper soft oils.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/indias-june-palm-oil-soyoil-imports-jump-on-lower-prices/articleshow/101483414.cms>

#### **India to insist on well-defined criteria for BRICS expansion**

India is likely to press for the establishment of a well-defined criteria for the proposed addition of new members to the BRICS grouping of emerging nations, instead of extending membership solely on the basis of recommendations by present members, as Sherpas meet in Durban this week to decide on the crucial issue ahead of the BRICS Summit next month, sources have said. "If BRICS nations decide on taking in new members, India would want formulation of well-established criteria for qualification. Once the criteria is in place, some eligibility condition could be mutually decided, for instance meeting of three out of five stated criteria," a source tracking the matter told businessline.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/india-to-insist-on-well-defined-criteria-for-brics-expansion/article67042092.ece>