



January 03, 2025 – Friday

## Economy

### India's Dec factory activity growth hits 2024 low, PMI shows

India's manufacturing activity grew in December at its weakest pace for the year amid softer demand and despite easing cost pressures and strong jobs growth, a survey showed, dulling the outlook for the start of 2025. That confounded a preliminary reading showing faster expansion last month in a sector that accounts for about a fifth of overall output in Asia's third-largest economy, which grew at its weakest pace in seven quarters in July-September. The HSBC final India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index, compiled by S&P Global, fell to 56.4 - the weakest since December 2023 - little changed from November's 56.5 but below an early estimate that showed a rise to 57.4. <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/indias-dec-factory-activity-growth-hits-2024-low-pmi-shows/articleshow/116872647.cms>

### Centre forms working group for base revision of WPI; Niti Aayog's Ramesh Chand to head

The Centre on Thursday announced formation of Working Group for base revision of the current series of Wholesale Price Index (WPI) from base 2011-12 to 2022-23. Professor Ramesh Chand of NITI Aayog has been tapped by Centre to head the group. Along with him, other 17 members are appointed to the group. The annual inflation rate based on the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) stood at 1.89 per cent (provisional) for November 2024, compared to 2.36 per cent in October 2024 and 1.91 per cent in September 2024.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/centre-forms-working-group-for-base-revision-of-wpi-niti-aayogs-ramesh-chand-to-head/articleshow/116879948.cms>

### Ministries assess skill needs to impart focused training

The ministry of skill development and entrepreneurship (MSDE) has initiated discussions with five central ministries to assess their scheme-specific demand for skilled workforce, a shift in strategy towards sector-specific and demand-specific skills training under the Skill India mission. The idea is to impart short-term training to the identified candidates as well as reskill and upskill them and prepare a pool of skilled workforce for smooth implementation of these schemes on ground, a senior government official, aware of the deliberations, told ET.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/ministries-assess-skill-needs-to-impart-focused-training/articleshow/116893072.cms>

### White-collar hiring up 9% in December: Report

White-collar hiring activity in December witnessed a 9 per cent increase compared to the same period of the previous year, driven by high-skill and strategic roles, a report said on Thursday. According to Naukri JobSpeak, the index reached an impressive 2,651 points in December 2024, reflecting a robust 9 per cent year-on-year growth, a promising sign for the year ahead. Key sectors that were primary growth drivers in December 2024, included AI/ML (36 per cent), Oil and Gas (13 per cent), FMCG (12 per cent) and Healthcare (12 per cent), said the report.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/white-collar-hiring-up-9-in-december-report/article69053600.ece>

### **Private capex revival still not on horizon, says RBI survey**

More than half of the respondents surveyed in the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Systemic Risk Survey (SRS) do not expect a revival in the private capital expenditure cycle in the coming year, contrary to the central bank's own assessment that economic activity is likely to pick up in the second half of this year. In the 27th round of the SRS which was conducted in November 2024, the RBI surveyed 51 respondents including economists and market participants, on major risks faced by the Indian financial system. The survey gauged participant's perceptions of global risks like geopolitical conflicts, commodity price risks and tightening interest rates in advance economies. Among macroeconomic factors respondents gave their opinion on risk perception due to domestic growth, inflation and capital flows.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/private-capex-revival-still-not-on-horizon-says-rbi-survey/articleshow/116887154.cms>

### **Mospi: Surveys on health, labour force, telecom to start in January**

Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI) on Thursday said the National Statistics Office (NSO) will start three surveys in January. These include NSS 80th Round: Survey on Social Consumption- Health (Jan to Dec 2025), Comprehensive Modular Survey-Telecom and ICT skill (Jan to March), and Education (April to June). The others surveys are -- Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) (Jan-Dec) and Annual Survey on Unincorporated Enterprise (ASUSE) (Jan-Dec 2025).

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/nso-begins-3-surveys-this-month/articleshow/116891292.cms>

## **Finance**

### **Budget 2025 Wishlist: Financial sector seeks tax sops, steps to deepen financial markets**

The financial sector, especially banks on Thursday made a case for tax sops in the upcoming Budget for fixed deposits to support savings which have seen reduction in recent past. Suggestions regarding improving efficiency of capital markets and increasing capital market inclusion were also made during the pre-Budget meeting with Finance Minister, Edelweiss Mutual Fund MD & CEO Radhika Gupta told reporters here.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/budget-2025-wishlist-financial-sector-seeks-tax-sops-steps-to-deepen-financial-markets/articleshow/116890510.cms>

### **MFIN extends deadline for adhering to maximum three-lenders per borrower rule by three months**

The Microfinance Institutions Network (MFIN) has extended the deadline for adhering to the maximum three-lenders per borrower rule by another three months, people aware of the matter said. In the last week of November, the microfinance self regulator told its members to follow stricter lending principles in an effort to address the sector's asset quality stress.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/banking/finance/banking/mfin-extends-deadline-for-adhering-to-maximum-three-lenders-per-borrower-rule-by-three-months/articleshow/116885687.cms>

### **Banks urge RBI to inject liquidity via foreign-exchange swaps amid crunch**

Some big lenders in India have asked the central bank to inject liquidity using foreign-exchange swaps as short-term currency financing costs surged to a four-year high, according to people familiar with the matter. In recent informal interactions, some lenders asked the Reserve Bank of India to consider using FX swaps, where the parties simultaneously agree to exchange currencies in the spot market and reverse the transaction at a future date, the people said. Such operations could effectively inject rupee liquidity into the financial markets.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/banking/banks-urge-rbi-to-inject-liquidity-via-foreign-exchange-swaps-amid-crunch-125010200500\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/banking/banks-urge-rbi-to-inject-liquidity-via-foreign-exchange-swaps-amid-crunch-125010200500_1.html)

### **Banking credit growth to remain subdued around 10% for FY26: ICRA**

Credit growth may ease to 9.7-10.3 per cent in FY26, weighed down by the persisting high CD ratio and implementation of the proposed changes in the liquidity coverage ratio (LCR) framework, ICRA said in a report. ICRA has revised its credit growth estimate downwards to 10.5-11 per cent for FY25 from its earlier estimate of 11.6-12.5 per cent.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/banking/banking-credit-growth-to-remain-subdued-around-10-for-fy26-icra-125010200935\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/banking/banking-credit-growth-to-remain-subdued-around-10-for-fy26-icra-125010200935_1.html)

### **India's non-life Insurance industry may register double-digit growth in 2025**

Despite flat general insurance penetration in the country, the non-life insurers are expecting to register double-digit growth in 2025 with a conducive regulatory environment and launch of innovative products catering to specific customer needs, stakeholders said on Thursday. The industry is also expected to meet this expectation if it receives a favourable outcome on GST relief and a revisit of motor third-party rates, a top private insurer said. "While health insurance will continue to drive growth in the coming years, there will likely be significant expansion in non-motor and non-health segments, such as pet insurance, liability, professional indemnity, and housing insurance," Future Generali India Insurance Company Ltd managing director & CEO Anup Rau said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/banking/finance/insure/indias-non-life-insurance-industry-may-register-double-digit-growth-in-2025/articleshow/116877720.cms>

### **Industry**

### **Operating margin of consumer sector under pressure in Q3, says Nomura**

The improvement in rural demand notwithstanding, price hikes and weak urban demand has affected sales volumes in the consumer sector in the December quarter and this, along with higher input costs, will put pressure on operating margins of the companies, Nomura said in a note. It estimated annual sales growth in the consumer sector at 4.5 per cent, but added that volumes were likely under pressure, and with high raw material prices hitting gross profit margins, operating profits are likely to see a 2.5 per cent decline. "Price hikes and weak urban demand likely pressured volumes despite an improvement in rural demand," it noted.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/companies/operating-margin-of-consumer-sector-under-pressure-in-q3-says-nomura/article69053075.ece>

### **Q-comm sales hit record high on new year's eve**

Quick commerce firm saw their sales soaring to unprecedented levels in December 31. However, industry leaders anticipate a tough road ahead in 2025 as competition intensifies and market dynamics evolve. Aadit Palicha, co-founder and CEO of Zepto, underscored the sector's remarkable growth and the challenges that lie ahead in two separate LinkedIn posts. "This New Year's Eve marked a 200% increase in sales compared to last year. However, it will become increasingly clear in 2025 that q-commerce requires exceptional execution to thrive," Palicha said.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/business/industry-q-comm-sales-hit-record-high-on-new-years-eve-3705231/>

### **RFI issued for manufacturing 23-mm anti-drone ammunition to boost defence**

The government has issued a Request for Information (RFI) for the manufacturing of 23-mm anti-drone ammunition by the Indian industry, which is intended to be used with an existing weapon system for boosting the Army's air defence capabilities. This ammunition is intended to be used with the existing "Zu 23mm and Schilka Weapon System" for the destruction of drones.

[https://www.business-standard.com/external-affairs-defence-security/news/rfi-issued-for-manufacturing-23-mm-anti-drone-ammunition-to-boost-defence-125010200765\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/external-affairs-defence-security/news/rfi-issued-for-manufacturing-23-mm-anti-drone-ammunition-to-boost-defence-125010200765_1.html)

### **India second most targeted nation in terms of cyberattacks: CloudSEK**

India emerged as the second most targeted nation in terms of cyber attacks in the world as 95 Indian entities came under data theft attacks in 2024, cyber intelligence firm CloudSEK said in a report. According to the company's ThreatLandscape Report 2024 based on data monitoring in dark web, the US was the most targeted country, with 140 attacks, due to its economic dominance and digital infrastructure followed by India where data of 95 entities were attacked in 2024.

[https://www.business-standard.com/technology/tech-news/india-second-most-targeted-nation-in-terms-of-cyberattacks-cloudsek-125010200905\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/technology/tech-news/india-second-most-targeted-nation-in-terms-of-cyberattacks-cloudsek-125010200905_1.html)

### **FSSAI gives clarity on methylcobalamin usage**

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India has provided clarity on use of methylcobalamin, a form of Vitamin B12, in health supplements, medical purposes and nutraceutical products. However, the Union Health Ministry's decision to lift the ban on methylcobalamin, the critical vitamin B12 derivative, is yet to be formalised, leaving its regulatory status in limbo despite scientific backing and growing demand for its use in treating conditions such as diabetic neuropathy. While the Government of India's Scientific Committee approved the molecule's safety in 2019, the necessary gazette notification to officially lift the ban is still pending, raising concerns among health professionals and industry stakeholders.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/fssai-gives-clarity-on-methylcobalamin-usage/article69052614.ece>

## Agriculture

### India's sugar consumption likely at 28 million tonnes in 2024-25: Isma

According to data by the Indian Sugar and Bio-Energy Manufacturers Association (Isma), the domestic sales quota for the first four months of this year (sugar season 2024-25) is 0.7 million tonnes lower compared to the same period last year. It said that during the previous year (SY23-24), a higher sales quota was released due to an increased demand during the general elections (April–June 2024).

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/isma-estimates-lower-sugar-consumption-at-28-million-tonnes-for-sy25-125010200883\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/isma-estimates-lower-sugar-consumption-at-28-million-tonnes-for-sy25-125010200883_1.html)

## Infrastructure

### Railways earnings rise 4%, capex 2% in 9 months of FY25

Indian Railways registered a 4% increase in earnings and 2% higher capital expenditure in the first nine-months of the current fiscal compared with a year ago. According to official estimates, for the April to December period, total capital expenditure stood at Rs 1.92 lakh crore while freight raked in Rs 1.26 lakh crore in earnings. Earnings from passenger business were 6% higher at Rs 55,988 crore.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/transportation/railways/railways-earnings-rise-4-capex-2-in-9-months-of-fy25/articleshow/116873610.cms>

## Energy

### Renewable energy capacity additions may exceed 35 GW in 2025

India's renewable energy (RE) capacity addition could exceed 35 gigawatts (GW) in 2025 on the back of a strong project pipeline, favourable solar photovoltaic module prices, and an increase in wind manufacturing capacity, according to some industry executives. However, some companies said a faster pace of capacity addition is needed to meet the government's target of 500 GW of capacity addition by 2030. Between April and November of the current fiscal, India added almost 15 GW of renewable energy capacity, nearly double the 7.54 GW added in the same period last year.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/renewables/renewable-energy-capacity-additions-may-exceed-35-gw-in-2025/articleshow/116876421.cms>

### Oil and gas demand likely to remain strong in FY26: India Ratings

India's oil and gas demand is likely to remain strong in the next financial year even as weak global demand will drive down refining margins, India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) said on Thursday. The agency expects the credit profile of downstream companies to remain stable during the year, driven by healthy demand for petroleum products and healthy marketing margins that would offset compressed Gross Refining Margins (GRMs), yielding healthy overall EBITDA.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/oil-and-gas-demand-likely-to-remain-strong-in-fy26-india-ratings-125010200753\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/oil-and-gas-demand-likely-to-remain-strong-in-fy26-india-ratings-125010200753_1.html)

### Coal production from captive, commercial mines rises 34 pc in Apr-Dec period

Coal production from captive and commercial mines rose 34.2 per cent to 131.05 million tonnes (MT) in the April-December period of the current fiscal year. Coal output from captive and commercial mines was 97.665 MT in the year-ago period, the coal ministry said in a statement. Coal output from captive and commercial mines was 18.40 MT in December, the coal ministry said in a statement. According to the Index of Eight Core Industries (Base Year 2011-12) released by the government, the coal sector has demonstrated a growth of 7.5 per cent (provisional) to 199.6 points in November 2024 as compared to 185.7 points a year earlier, the ministry said in a separate statement. <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/indl-goods/svs/metals-mining/coal-production-from-captive-commercial-mines-rises-34-pc-in-apr-dec-period/articleshow/116890211.cms>

## States

### **Himachal to allocate 22 new hydropower projects of 828 MW capacity: Sukhu**

Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu on Thursday said the state government is set to allocate 22 new hydropower projects with a total capacity of 828 MW. The projects, ranging from 6.5 MW to 400 MW, are located across the districts of Kullu, Chamba, Kinnaur, Lahaul-Spiti, and Shimla. He said the largest allocation comprising nine projects with a total capacity of 595 MW is planned for the Chenab river basin. Additionally, eight projects totalling 169 MW are earmarked for the Sutlej river basin, four projects with a combined capacity of 55 MW for the Ravi basin and one project with a capacity of 9 MW for the Beas basin.

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/himachal-to-allocate-22-new-hydropower-projects-of-828-mw-capacity-sukhu-125010200587\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/himachal-to-allocate-22-new-hydropower-projects-of-828-mw-capacity-sukhu-125010200587_1.html)

### **AP cabinet approves Rs 2,723 cr for Amaravati works, other investments**

The Andhra Pradesh cabinet on Thursday approved two engineering projects worth Rs 2,723 crore for the greenfield capital city of Amaravati, including a 1 million tonne per annum green ammonia manufacturing facility and South India's first integrated energy project, among others. Although the previous YSRCP regime "neglected" Amaravati, Information & Public Relations Minister K Parthasarathy noted that the TDP-led government is taking steps to develop the greenfield capital to world-class standards.

[https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/ap-cabinet-approves-rs-2-723-cr-for-amaravati-works-other-investments-125010201052\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/ap-cabinet-approves-rs-2-723-cr-for-amaravati-works-other-investments-125010201052_1.html)

## Healthcare

### **ICMR proposes revised version of National Essential Diagnostics List**

The ICMR has proposed a revised version of the National Essential Diagnostics List (NEDL), which enumerates the minimum number of tests that should be available at various levels of healthcare facilities in the country. According to the revised draft, nine types of diagnostic tests, including those for diabetes, Malaria, TB, HIV and syphilis should be made available at the health centres in village-level health facilities. Ayushman Arogya Mandirs should have facilities for Hepatitis B tests available in addition to the nine diagnostics that are available at the village-level health centres.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/healthcare/icmr-proposes-revised-version-of-national-essential-diagnostics-list/articleshow/116880343.cms>

### **Big public health upgrade in works; govt hospitals could soon get more firepower**

India's public hospitals could soon have more firepower at their disposal if a big new healthcare plan, currently in the works, comes to fruition, ToI reported on January 2. The Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) has drafted a National Essential Diagnostics List (NEDL) outlining the minimum tests that the government-run health facilities -- anywhere in the country -- must offer. According to ToI's report (by Durgesh Nandan Jha), the list aims to guide facilities ranging from village health centers and Ayushman Arogya Mandirs (AAM) to district hospitals.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/healthcare/big-public-health-upgrade-in-works-govt-hospitals-could-soon-get-more-firepower/articleshow/116877113.cms>

## External

### **GTRI calls for assessment of steel industry before taking safeguard measures**

Economic think tank GTRI on Thursday called for a comprehensive assessment of the Indian steel industry to evaluate the impact of existing import measures before imposing the proposed safeguard duty. The Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) report has also claimed that the commerce ministry's ongoing safeguard investigation into alleged jump in imports of certain steel products suffers from "several" technical weaknesses such as focus on products with minimal import surges, and inappropriate use of global safeguards.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/indl-goods/svs/steel/gtri-calls-for-assessment-of-steel-industry-before-taking-safeguard-measures/articleshow/116877938.cms>

### **Looking at resuming crude oil supply to India, expanding trade basket: Iran**

Iran is looking at ways to resume supplying crude oil to India and is keen on expanding the overall trade basket including in the petro-chemical sector through the strategically-located Chabahar port, a senior Iranian official said on Thursday. Tehran is also keen to expand counter-terror cooperation with India as the possibility of rise in the terrorist activities looming large over West Asia in view of the fragile situation in the region, especially in Syria, he said.

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/looking-at-resuming-crude-oil-supply-to-india-expanding-trade-basket-iran-125010200817\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/looking-at-resuming-crude-oil-supply-to-india-expanding-trade-basket-iran-125010200817_1.html)

### **India-EFTA trade pact may come into force before end of 2025: Goyal**

The implementation process of free trade agreement (FTA) between India and the four-nation European bloc EFTA is progressing fast and is expected to come into force before the end of this year, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said. The two sides signed the Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) on March 10, 2024. Under the pact, India has received an investment commitment of USD 100 billion in 15 years from the grouping while allowing several products such as Swiss watches, chocolates and cut and polished diamonds at lower or zero duties.

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/india-efta-trade-pact-may-come-into-force-before-end-of-2025-goyal-125010200534\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/india-efta-trade-pact-may-come-into-force-before-end-of-2025-goyal-125010200534_1.html)

### **No legal right to demand reasons for excluding feedback in FTP: DGFT**

The government on Thursday said no person has any legal right to seek reasons for their suggestions, views, or feedback not being included in the Foreign Trade Policy (FTP). The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) in a notification also said that the government may seek views of the industry stakeholders for the FTP but it reserves the right to suo moto formulate, amend or incorporate any specific provisions in the policy, without seeking views, suggestions, comments, or feedback from stakeholders.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/no-legal-right-to-demand-reasons-for-excluding-feedback-in-ftp-dgft/articleshow/116890436.cms>

### **India's textile exports grew 7 pc to USD 21.35 bn during Apr-Oct period of FY25: Govt**

India's textiles and apparel exports, including handicrafts, grew 7 per cent during the April-October period to USD 21.35 billion, the government said on Thursday. The outbound shipments from the sector stood at USD 20 billion in the same period of the previous financial year, FY 2023-24. "The Ready Made Garments (RMG) category with exports of USD 8,733 million has the largest share (41 per cent) in the total exports (USD 21,358 million) during the period of April-October of FY 2024-25, followed by Cotton Textiles (33 per cent, USD 7,082 million), Man-Made Textiles (15 per cent, USD 3,105 million)," the Textiles Ministry said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/indias-textile-exports-grew-7-pc-to-usd-21-35-bn-during-apr-oct-period-of-fy25-govt/articleshow/116882278.cms>