



January 09, 2025 – Thursday

## Economy

### **Budget 2025 should focus on increasing Capex, checking fiscal deficit & reducing debt to GDP: EY India**

Emphasis on fiscal consolidation, tax system simplification, and investment-driven growth, in the Budget 2025 will lay a solid foundation for sustained economic development in India, asserted global consulting and professional services firm Ernst & Young (EY) India. As India prepares for the Union Budget 2025-26, expectations are focused on a set of strategic reforms that can propel the economy forward.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/infrastructure/budget-2025-should-focus-on-increasing-capex-checking-fiscal-deficit-reducing-debt-to-gdp-ey-india/articleshow/117050123.cms>

### **Farm workers, drivers largest growing jobs; cashiers most declining: Study**

Farm workers and drivers will figure among the fastest growing jobs over the next five years, while roles of cashiers and ticket clerks will see the largest decline, a new study showed on Wednesday. In its Future of Jobs Report 2025, the World Economic Forum (WEF) also said that 170 million new jobs will be created by 2030, while 92 million are projected to be displaced, resulting in 78 million net new jobs. The report, released days before the WEF Annual Meeting in Davos from January 20-25, said that job disruption will equate to 22 per cent of jobs by 2030.

[https://www.business-standard.com/world-news/farm-workers-drivers-largest-growing-jobs-cashiers-most-declining-study-125010800455\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/world-news/farm-workers-drivers-largest-growing-jobs-cashiers-most-declining-study-125010800455_1.html)

## Finance

### **Centre to simplify decades-old income tax filing rules in upcoming Budget**

India's government plans to simplify its income tax filing rules to make it less tedious for taxpayers to comply with the law and help cut down on disputes that have ballooned to more than \$120 billion over the past decade. A proposed revamp of the Income-tax Act of 1961 is currently being finalized and will likely be issued for public consultation around mid-January, according to people familiar with the matter, who asked not to be identified as the information isn't public. The revised legislation will then be released in the government's budget, expected in early February, they said.

[https://www.business-standard.com/budget/news/centre-to-simplify-decades-old-income-tax-filing-rules-in-upcoming-budget-125010800443\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/budget/news/centre-to-simplify-decades-old-income-tax-filing-rules-in-upcoming-budget-125010800443_1.html)

### **Banks, dealers want RBI to act on the liquidity front**

Banks and primary dealers are urging the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to inject liquidity into the market through foreign exchange swaps or open market operations (OMOs) during its upcoming policy meeting on February 7, as system liquidity has logged a deficit since mid-December. With short-term borrowing costs at three-year highs and rupee forward premiums near two-year peaks, market participants expect the RBI will act to ease the current liquidity crunch. Higher forward premiums hurt importers.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/banking/finance/banking/banks-dealers-want-rbi-to-act-on-the-liquidity-front/articleshow/117063642.cms>

### **Sebi asks companies to disclose whistleblower complaints in IPO filings**

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has directed companies preparing for public offerings to disclose any complaints received from whistleblowers, company insiders, or anonymous sources, especially those related to the company's promoters, after submitting their draft offer documents for initial public offerings (IPOs). This development comes as Sebi makes a rare intervention in halting the IPOs of two companies in recent months due to whistleblower complaints about insufficient or misleading disclosures in their offer documents. Sebi has recently reviewed allegations of fraud and incomplete disclosures against two small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that were looking to go public.

[https://www.business-standard.com/markets/news/sebi-whistleblower-complaints-ipo-disclosure-transparency-2025-125010800367\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/markets/news/sebi-whistleblower-complaints-ipo-disclosure-transparency-2025-125010800367_1.html)

### **MFI portfolio declines, bad assets spike in September quarter: Report**

Microfinancing outstandings in the system reduced 4.3 per cent to Rs 4.14 lakh crore in the September quarter as lenders adopted a cautious stance amid deteriorating asset quality, a report said on Wednesday. Loans unpaid for 1-30 days increased to 2.1 per cent from the 1.2 per cent in June, while the ones unpaid for 31-180 days witnessed a sharper rise at 4.3 per cent as against 2.7 per cent in June, credit information company Crif High Mark said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/banking/finance/mfi-portfolio-declines-bad-assets-spike-in-september-quarter-report/articleshow/117051845.cms>

## **Industry**

### **NRAI seeks industry status for food services sector**

The National Restaurant Association of India has urged the government to grant industry status to the food services sector. It seeks a fair e-commerce policy and other reforms to protect restaurants, delivery partners, and consumers from exploitative practices. NRAI also calls for longer operational hours, targeted subsidies, and easier access to finance for SMEs.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/food/nrai-seeks-industry-status-for-food-services-sector/articleshow/117058893.cms>

### **Domestic steel demand to outpace other economies with 8-9% growth in 2025; safeguard duty may help steel price hike**

India will witness more demand for steel in comparison to other major steel consuming economies in the calendar year 2025, with a growth of 8-9 per cent, stated a report by CRISIL. The growth, it added, will be driven by a shift towards steel-intensive construction in the housing and infrastructure sectors along with better demand from engineering, packaging and other segments. . With economies such as the EU, US and Korea expected to see a recovery in residential construction, and with easing of financing conditions, the demand is anticipated to grow. India will continue to lead the pack in terms of demand.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/business/industry-domestic-steel-demand-to-outpace-other-economies-with-8-9-growth-in-2025-safeguard-duty-may-help-steel-price-hike-3710173/>

### **Electric car sales in India jump 20% in 2024, Tata Motors retains top spot**

Electric car sales in India rose 20% in 2024, closing the year just below 100,000 units sold compared to 82,688 the previous year. Price cuts toward the end of the year is said to have boosted the sales. This growth occurred despite consumer concerns about charging infrastructure, battery life, and resale values, according to the Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA). Electric vehicles made up 2.4% of the total 4.07 million vehicles sold, up from 2.1% in 2023. Gasoline, diesel, and hybrid vehicles still dominated the market.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/renewables/electric-car-sales-in-india-jump-20-in-2024-tata-motors-retains-top-spot/articleshow/117045559.cms>

### **Over 2,000 startups in edtech sector shut shop in past five years**

India's once-thriving edtech sector is witnessing a significant downturn, with 2,148 startups shutting operations in the past five years, according to data shared by Traxcn, a data intelligence platform, exclusively with *Business Standard*. The edtech platforms, which experienced unprecedented growth during the pandemic-induced

lockdowns, are now grappling with a funding slowdown, shifting market needs, and post-pandemic operational challenges. Highlighting the importance of adaptability and innovation, “The edtech sector has witnessed a wave of shutdowns as startups relying on classroom training and generic materials struggled to adapt to evolving demands. Many were caught in a burnout race, chasing unsustainable growth without innovating.”

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/over-2-000-startups-in-edtech-sector-shut-shop-in-past-five-years-125010801062\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/over-2-000-startups-in-edtech-sector-shut-shop-in-past-five-years-125010801062_1.html)

### **Q3 results preview: Cement firms' earnings, profitability likely to decline**

Indian cement makers may report single-digit growth in volumes, while profitability is likely to take a hit for the 2024-25 (FY25) October-December (Q3) quarter. A Bloomberg analysts' consensus shows both earnings before interest, tax, depreciation, and amortisation (Ebitda) and profit after tax declining for most cement makers in the quarter under review. In the absence of major price hikes, lower realisations will impact profitability on a year-on-year (Y-o-Y) basis, according to analysts. Cement prices during the quarter under review remained depressed for the most part, except for a price hike taken towards the end.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/q3-results-preview-cement-firms-earnings-profitability-likely-to-decline-125010800989\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/q3-results-preview-cement-firms-earnings-profitability-likely-to-decline-125010800989_1.html)

### **Consumer goods sector faces a muted quarter as urban demand stays sluggish**

Growth in India's consumer goods sector is expected to remain weak for the October-December 2024 quarter, according to a report by Mirae Asset Sharekhan. The slowdown is driven by sluggish urban demand, a gradual recovery in rural demand, and price hikes across product categories. Despite these challenges, revenues for tracked companies are projected to grow 6 per cent year-on-year, primarily driven by price increases, while volume growth will stay in the low single digits. However, profit after tax is expected to decline by 7 per cent due to muted revenue growth and shrinking margins.

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/india-consumer-goods-slowdown-2024-report-mirae-125010800817\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/india-consumer-goods-slowdown-2024-report-mirae-125010800817_1.html)

### **India mines ministry seeks Rs 2,600 crore budget for critical minerals**

Indian mines ministry is seeking a Rs 2,600 crore (about \$303 million) budget for critical minerals, a government official said on Wednesday, declining to be named as the discussion is not yet public.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/indl-goods/svs/metals-mining/india-mines-ministry-seeks-rs-2600-crore-budget-for-critical-minerals/articleshow/117052770.cms>

### **India's mobile phone production capacity: Unutilised potential amidst declining demand**

As much as half of the mobile phone manufacturing capacities created since the government launched its local manufacturing push through the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme are now unutilised or being used to make other products due to weak demand globally and domestically, industry executives and market trackers said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/electronics/indias-mobile-phone-production-capacity-unutilised-potential-amidst-declining-demand/articleshow/117063840.cms>

### **Cost of construction equipment vehicles to increase with new emission regulations: ICRA**

The introduction of stricter emission regulations, alongside tougher safety standards, is expected to increase the cost of construction equipment vehicles (CEVs) by 12-15 per cent on average, depending on the equipment type. These cost increases are likely to be passed on to customers within the next 12-18 months.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/companies/cost-of-construction-equipment-vehicles-to-increase-with-new-emission-regulations-icra/article69076705.ece>

## **Agriculture**

### **India must speed up hybrid technology adoption in pulses, oilseeds to reduce imports, says PK Mishra, Principal Secretary to PM**

India needs to accelerate adoption of hybrid technology in pulses and oilseeds to address production deficits, while acknowledging the challenges faced by farmers in implementing these advanced farm practices, Principal Secretary

to Prime Minister PK Mishra said on Wednesday. Mishra highlighted that despite showing promising results, hybrid varieties, particularly in crops like pigeon pea('toor dal'), have not achieved widespread adoption among farmers. <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/agriculture/india-must-speed-up-hybrid-technology-adoption-in-pulses-oilseeds-to-reduce-imports-says-pk-mishra-principal-secretary-to-pm/articleshow/117052910.cms>

#### **Huge opportunities to increase share in global agri trade: APEDA chairman**

Indian exporters have huge opportunities to increase their share in the global agriculture trade from the current 2.4 per cent, a government official said on Wednesday. The global agriculture trade is about \$2 trillion. Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) Chairman Abhishek Dev said that given these numbers, "huge opportunities" are there to increase exports from the country. Despite being the seventh largest agri exporter in the world, "our share is 2.4 per cent in the overall world agri trade and immense possibilities are there to increase this share," he said at the inauguration of Indusfood 2025 at Greater Noida. [https://www.business-standard.com/industry/agriculture/huge-opportunities-to-increase-share-in-global-agri-trade-apeda-chairman-125010800638\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/agriculture/huge-opportunities-to-increase-share-in-global-agri-trade-apeda-chairman-125010800638_1.html)

#### **Government decides to sell rice from FCI at ₹28/kg for ethanol**

The Centre has decided to fix the rice price at ₹28/kg from the stock of the Food Corporation of India (FCI) for supply to distilleries for production of ethanol. The selling price before Tuesday's revision was variable and at par with average auction rate in the weekly e-auction taking place now. However, the government is yet to decide the ethanol price which may soon be revised upward from ₹58.50/litre as it was fixed when FCI rice was sold at ₹20/kg in 2023-24. <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/government-decides-to-sell-rice-from-fci-at-28kg-for-ethanol/article69075490.ece>

### **Energy**

#### **Budget 2025: IESA asks govt to tax all new tech batteries at 5% GST**

Ahead of the Union Budget, India Energy Storage Alliance (IESA) President Debi Prasad Dash told PTI that the government may consider protecting domestic cells and battery component manufacturers in the wake of an increase in imports of lithium-ion cells, which has risen to Rs 24,000 crore in FY24 from Rs 18,000 crore in FY23, especially from China. There is a disparity in the tax structure of batteries, he said, adding GST for lithium-ion batteries is 18 per cent, but other chemistries, like lead acid, sodium, and flow batteries and others, are at 28 per cent. On the other hand, for electric vehicles, the GST is 5 per cent. "So, as an industry, we need support to this emerging sector, and all new technologies must be taxed at 5 per cent, and there should not be any difference between different technologies," Dash said. [https://www.business-standard.com/industry/auto/budget-2025-iesa-asks-govt-to-tax-all-new-tech-batteries-at-5-gst-125010801138\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/auto/budget-2025-iesa-asks-govt-to-tax-all-new-tech-batteries-at-5-gst-125010801138_1.html)

#### **Power generation capacity for next 2 years to be reassessed**

The government is initiating a fresh exercise to review available power generation capacity for the next two fiscal years including battery energy storage systems, people familiar with the development told ET. The move is aimed at ensuring readiness to meet rising peak power demand. As per the latest Electric Power Survey, the projected peak demand for FY26 is 270 GW and 249 GW for solar and non-solar hours respectively. In FY27, peak demand for solar hours may reach 288 GW and non-solar hours at 265 GW. <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/power/power-generation-capacity-for-next-2-years-to-be-reassessed/articleshow/117063359.cms>

#### **India's solar sector shines in 2024 with record new capacity addition**

The solar energy segment set a new record in 2024 with an annual capacity addition of 25 GW. This contributed significantly to the renewable energy sector's total capacity addition of 28 GW during the calendar year.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/todays-paper/tp-news/indias-solar-sector-shines-in-2024-with-record-new-capacity-addition/article69077398.ece>

### **India's 2024 power output growth slowest since Covid-19, shows data**

India's electricity generation grew at its slowest pace in 2024 since the Covid-19 pandemic, an analysis of federal grid regulator data showed, hit by a slowdown in the world's fastest growing major economy. Power output rose 5.8 per cent annually to 1,824.13 billion kilowatt-hours (kWh). Growth in power generation averaged 2.3 per cent in the year's second half, nearly a quarter of the first half's rise of 9.6 per cent, the data showed. The slackening electricity generation was in line with a softening economy, which grew at the slowest pace in nearly two years during the quarter that ended on Sept. 30.

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/india-s-2024-power-output-growth-slowest-since-covid-19-shows-data-125010800320\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/india-s-2024-power-output-growth-slowest-since-covid-19-shows-data-125010800320_1.html)

## **States**

### **India eyes two more lithium blocks in Jammu and Kashmir, sources says**

The Indian government is looking at two more blocks in the federally administered region of Jammu and Kashmir for lithium exploration, government officials directly aware of the matter said on Wednesday. Estimated reserves in the two blocks will be known by October, the officials added, but declined to be identified as the matter is not public.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/indl-goods/svs/metals-mining/india-eyes-two-more-lithium-blocks-in-jammu-and-kashmir-sources-says/articleshow/117053300.cms>

## **Healthcare**

### **Centre may decide on rollout of Schedule M by next week**

The government is expected to take a decision on implementing the revised Schedule M by next week, people familiar with the matter told ET. While pharma lobby groups have been seeking a two-year extension, the health ministry has not yet received any formal feedback requesting such an extension, a senior government official said. This comes with just three days left for stakeholders to submit comments on the draft notification.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/pharmaceuticals/centre-may-decide-on-rollout-of-schedule-m-by-next-week/articleshow/117063889.cms>

## **External**

### **India to continue working together with Oman in tourism sector, says min**

Oman's Minister of Heritage and Tourism, Salim bin Mohammed Al Mahrouqi, expressed on Wednesday that India and Oman continue to work together in the tourism sector, facilitating easier movement and exchanges between the two nations. He also emphasised eagerness to see the ties growing between Oman and India in the tourism sector. Speaking with ANI, Mahrouqi noted that Indians are number two in terms of tourism influx to Oman. He added that Oman is particularly well-known in the Indian market as a popular wedding destination.

[https://www.business-standard.com/external-affairs-defence-security/news/india-to-continue-working-together-with-oman-in-tourism-sector-says-min-125010900078\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/external-affairs-defence-security/news/india-to-continue-working-together-with-oman-in-tourism-sector-says-min-125010900078_1.html)

### **Govt slashes Nov gold import data by \$5 billion in commodity revision**

The government has revised downwards the gold import data for November to \$9.8 billion, a sharp reduction from the earlier announced figure of \$14.8 billion, Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCI) data showed on Wednesday. The \$5 billion revision was attributed to a 'calculation error' caused by alleged double counting of gold shipments in warehouses following a change in methodology in July. The commerce department has not yet issued an official statement on the revised data. The revised data also suggests a narrowing of India's trade deficit by \$5 billion, reducing it to \$32.8 billion in November from the previously reported all-time high of \$37.8 billion.

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/govt-slashes-nov-gold-import-data-by-5-billion-in-commodity-revision-125010800555\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/govt-slashes-nov-gold-import-data-by-5-billion-in-commodity-revision-125010800555_1.html)

### **Three-wheeler exports rebound in 2024 despite global economic challenges**

India's three-wheeler exports have shown a resurgence in 2024, due to a host of factors including recovery in key export destinations like Sri Lanka, Kenya and Nepal, and a falling rupee. Data from the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) reveals a growth of 6.70 per cent in exports during the April-November period of the financial year 2024-25 (FY25). The growth in exports is particularly noteworthy considering the prevailing macroeconomic headwinds, rising inflation and slowing global growth. Key export markets like Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nigeria, and Egypt have been facing significant economic challenges, impacting demand for Indian three-wheelers.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/auto/three-wheeler-exports-rebound-in-2024-despite-global-economic-challenges-125010800529\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/auto/three-wheeler-exports-rebound-in-2024-despite-global-economic-challenges-125010800529_1.html)

### **Export of petroleum products up 3 per cent in December**

India's export of petroleum products in December increased by 3.1% to 1.37 million barrels per day against 1.33 million barrels per day in the corresponding period of last fiscal 2023-24, as per data from energy cargo tracking firm Vortexa. The exports also increased by 4.5% from 1.31 million barrels per day in the previous month. Africa emerged as the top destination for the country's exports in December, while supplies to the traditional importers – Asia and Europe declined significantly.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/business/industry-export-of-petroleum-products-up-3-per-cent-in-december-3709631/>