



February 24, 2025 – Monday

## Economy

### More interest rate cuts on way, signal MPC minutes

The Reserve Bank of India is expected to implement more interest rate cuts in the coming months to boost economic growth. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has shifted its immediate focus from controlling inflation to fostering growth. The recent 25 basis points cut in the repo rate to 6.25% reflects this change, with further cuts likely.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/more-interest-rate-cuts-on-way-signal-mpc-minutes/articleshow/118461675.cms>

### Centre plans digital push to tackle non-response in sample surveys

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) is considering allowing responses through digital mode in sample surveys in a bid to tackle the increasing instances of non-responsiveness among respondents, especially high-income groups.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/centre-plans-digital-push-to-tackle-non-response-in-sample-surveys-125022300547\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/centre-plans-digital-push-to-tackle-non-response-in-sample-surveys-125022300547_1.html)

### "Worst seems to be behind," Indian economy shows signs of recovery: Report

The challenging time which persisted due to the contraction of the economic growth seems to be over, as new orders, agriculture exports, rural wages, Index of Industrial Production (IIP), steel production, auto sales and tax collections have picked up after a weak third-quarter calendar year 2024 according to a report by BNP Paribas.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/worst-seems-to-be-behind-indian-economy-shows-signs-of-recovery-report/articleshow/118497201.cms>

### Rural market at turning point with growth potential, says Marico MD & CEO

The "aspirational" rural market is at an "inflection point, which offers significant opportunities and long-term potential to the FMCG companies with price point packs, said Marico M D & CEO Saugata Gupta. The hinterland, with its large population base and rising disposable income offers 'headroom for growth' for FMCG as people there now aspire for the same brands of products as other markets Gupta told PTI.

[https://www.business-standard.com/companies/news/rural-market-at-inflection-point-offers-headroom-long-term-potential-for-growth-marico-md-ceo-125022300323\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/companies/news/rural-market-at-inflection-point-offers-headroom-long-term-potential-for-growth-marico-md-ceo-125022300323_1.html)

### No extra outlay for MGNREGS in FY25

With just a little over a month to go for FY25 to end, the Centre has decided not to release any additional funds for the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS), as it feels the outlay of Rs 86,000 crore will be enough for the year. Officials said about Rs 7,500 crore unspent balance from this year's allocation should cover the remaining period.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/policy/economy-no-extra-outlay-for-mgnregs-in-fy25-3758125/>

## Finance

### **Experts to RBI: More OMOs needed to ease liquidity stress**

Despite the Reserve Bank of India's continued efforts, liquidity conditions in the banking system remain tight. Market participants suggest that to ease durable liquidity, the RBI should consider reducing the incremental cash reserve ratio (ICRR), conducting long-term repo operations, increasing open market operation (OMO) purchases, or implementing more long-term buy/sell swaps. They stressed the need to inject additional funds into the system before any potential rate cut in April's monetary policy committee meeting, as inadequate liquidity could limit its impact.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/business/banking-finance-experts-to-rbi-more-omos-needed-to-ease-liquidity-stress-3758172/>

### **Bank of Maharashtra cuts interest rate by 25 basis points on retail loans**

State-owned Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) has cut interest rate by 25 basis points on retail loans, including home and car loans in line with reduction in repo rate by RBI.

[https://www.business-standard.com/companies/news/bank-of-maharashtra-cuts-interest-rate-by-25-basis-points-on-retail-loans-125022300263\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/companies/news/bank-of-maharashtra-cuts-interest-rate-by-25-basis-points-on-retail-loans-125022300263_1.html)

### **Banks' deposit insurance hike may be on the anvil amid periodic review**

M Nagaraju, secretary in the Department of Financial Services, has said a hike in coverage is under consideration (speculated to be at ₹15 lakh from the current ₹5 lakh). This issue – among other matters – may figure at a meeting to be held with the chief executive officers of state-run banks on March 4.

[https://www.business-standard.com/finance/news/banks-deposit-insurance-hike-may-be-on-the-anvil-amid-periodic-review-125022300723\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/finance/news/banks-deposit-insurance-hike-may-be-on-the-anvil-amid-periodic-review-125022300723_1.html)

### **Insolvency cases by operational creditors decline 41% in 9 months**

Insolvency cases filed by operational creditors have decreased significantly this fiscal year, favoring quicker out-of-court settlements. The number of these cases dropped 41% up to December, while applications are still substantial but withdrawn once dues are settled. Higher default thresholds and costs deter smaller creditors from formal proceedings.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/insolvency-cases-by-operational-creditors-decline-41-in-9-months/articleshow/118510941.cms>

### **Digital currency wallets to be used for study loan subsidies**

The government is collaborating with banks to implement a system for routing and settling interest subsidies on education loans through digital currency wallets. This initiative aims to integrate with the Unified Portal for Education Loan, enhance the efficiency of subsidy claims, and reduce fraud by using Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC).

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/digital-currency-wallets-to-be-used-for-study-loan-subsidies/articleshow/118510946.cms>

### **Sebi mulls expanding investors pool for angel funds**

Markets regulator Sebi is looking to expand the definition of qualified institutional buyers (QIB) and remove the 200-investor cap, allowing angel funds to access a broader pool of accredited investors. This move will enable more wealthy investors to participate, boosting funding for startups. It ensures that only financially strong investors take on high-risk investments, helping Angel Funds raise more capital and support early-stage companies. Angel Funds, a type of venture capital fund, mobilize money from investors to support startups.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/market/sebi-mulls-expanding-investors-pool-for-angel-funds-3758059/>

### **Irdai asks insurance firms to pump Rs 300 crore into Bima Sugam by Feb end**

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has directed insurance companies, which will be shareholders in Bima Sugam—its ambitious project to create an Amazon-like digital platform for buying, selling and servicing insurance policies—to inject initial capital of Rs 300 crore by the end of this month, according to multiple sources familiar with the development.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/irdai-asks-insurance-firms-to-pump-rs-300-crore-into-bima-sugam-by-feb-end-125022300257\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/irdai-asks-insurance-firms-to-pump-rs-300-crore-into-bima-sugam-by-feb-end-125022300257_1.html)

#### **Virtual digital assets to be brought within scope of undisclosed income under Income Tax Act**

In an effort to further rein in misuse of crypto, government has proposed to include virtual digital asset (VDA) in the definition of undisclosed income for block assessment scheme. This means non-disclosure could lead to tax at 60 per cent besides penalty. Virtual digital assets (VDA) include any information, code, number or token not being Indian or foreign currency, and generated through cryptographic means or others.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/virtual-digital-assets-to-be-brought-within-scope-of-undisclosed-income-under-income-tax-act/article69254226.ece>

#### **Smaller ARCs may jump on the IPO bandwagon to meet ₹300 crore minimum NOF criteria**

With the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) recently clearing the decks for Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARCs) to raise equity via initial public offering (IPO), the smaller entities among them may be the first off the starting block to tap the capital market. The option to go public comes at an opportune time as they will need capital to achieve the regulatory minimum net owned fund requirement (NOF) of ₹300 crore, prescribed by RBI for ARCs, by March-end 2026.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/money-and-banking/smaller-arcs-may-jump-on-the-ipo-bandwagon-to-meet-300-cr-minimum-nof-criteria/article69255413.ece>

### **Industry**

#### **Financial, capacity constraints of EU's carbon border policy may disrupt India's steel sector**

The EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism presents difficulties for India's small and medium-sized steel enterprises due to financial and technological constraints, as per an IIM-Lucknow study. While larger steel plants might adapt, smaller ones face significant challenges, leading to unequal outcomes. The study suggests supportive measures like technology transfer and capacity-building for fair decarbonisation.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/indl-goods/svs/steel/financial-capacity-constraints-of-eus-carbon-border-policy-may-disrupt-indias-steel-sector-study/articleshow/118503810.cms>

#### **Indian wines stay robust amid global concerns**

Amid a global supply glut, difficult weather and falling demand worldwide, which has hit a 27-year low (as per a World Spirits Alliance report), Indian wines continue to show signs of resilience and adaptability, with insiders anticipating the market to grow by as much as 10-15% in the next 3-5 years. At the forefront of this growth momentum is premiumisation and innovation, said experts.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/business/industry/indian-wines-stay-robust-amid-global-concerns/3757554/>

#### **Electric 2-wheeler sales remain in fast lane, market share may grow three-fold in five years**

India's leading two-wheeler manufacturers, including Hero MotoCorp, HMTI, and TVS Motor, predict that electric two-wheelers will account for 20% of market sales by 2030, driven mainly by scooters. Hero is launching a new affordable electric scooter, while Honda is focusing on battery swapping stations. TVS Motor, the largest legacy EV maker, is also planning multiple EV launches.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/renewables/electric-2-wheeler-sales-remain-in-fast-lane-market-share-may-grow-three-fold-in-five-years/articleshow/118508446.cms>

#### **Regional creators and AI drive India's short video boom in 2025**

The short-form video revolution has taken over a big pie of India's digital consumption. According to the Redseer report, "India SFV in 2024: From 'Likes to Monetising Millions'" SFV platforms experienced a 3.6x increase in daily active users in 2024. With an estimated 650 million active users across India by 2025, these platforms have solidified their role as a cornerstone of digital entertainment and engagement. This dynamic rise of short videos fuelled by user generated content represents incredible possibilities for brands to reach and engage with their target audiences and achieve their marketing goals.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/business/brandwagon-regional-creators-and-ai-drive-indias-short-video-boom-in-2025-3757307/>

### **Inside India's quick commerce boom**

As companies expand operations and new players enter the market, the quick commerce industry is witnessing an unprecedented surge, with the workforce projected to reach nearly five lakh by 2025 year-end, as per the data shared by TeamLease. However, while the industry promises rapid employment growth, questions remain about the sustainability of gig jobs, benefits, and long-term viability.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/inside-india-s-quick-commerce-boom-earnings-growth-gig-workforce-trends-125022300402\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/inside-india-s-quick-commerce-boom-earnings-growth-gig-workforce-trends-125022300402_1.html)

## **Agriculture**

### **Rising temp to increase default risk probability in 30% of agri loans**

Rising temperature and growing threat of climate change may increase default risk in 30 per cent of agri and housing loans portfolio in the next five years, according to an analysis by BCG. According to the report, the average global temperature has already increased approximately 1.2 degree Celsius versus pre-industrial levels leading to flooding in coastal areas and reduction in agriculture production.

[https://www.business-standard.com/markets/news/rising-temp-to-increase-default-risk-probability-in-30-of-agri-loans-rpt-125022300222\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/markets/news/rising-temp-to-increase-default-risk-probability-in-30-of-agri-loans-rpt-125022300222_1.html)

## **Infrastructure**

### **Housing demand strong in major cities, but euphoria easing**

Demand for residential properties remains "very strong" across major cities but the euphoria seen in the last few years is mellowing down a little bit, said Pirojsha Godrej, the executive chairperson of Godrej Properties. Godrej Properties is one of the leading real estate developers in the country. It became the largest listed realty firm in 2024 in terms of sales bookings or pre-sales by selling more than Rs 28,000 crore worth of properties. In an interview with PTI, Pirojsha Godrej noted that there is no demand slowdown in the housing market, as reflected from the company's pre-sales numbers.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/housing-demand-strong-in-major-cities-but-euphoria-easing-pirojsha-godrej-125022300159\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/housing-demand-strong-in-major-cities-but-euphoria-easing-pirojsha-godrej-125022300159_1.html)

### **India's ports sector set for major growth with 500-550 MTPA capacity expansion annually by FY2028**

India's ports sector is expected to add 500-550 MTPA of capacity annually between FY2023 and FY2028, driven by POL, coal, and containerized cargo. Major ports handled 819 MMT of cargo in FY24. The sector's infrastructure includes 13 major and 205 non-major ports, strategically positioned to enhance India's dominance in global maritime trade.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/transportation/shipping-/transport/indias-ports-sector-set-for-major-growth-with-500-550-mtpa-capacity-expansion-annually-by-fy2028/articleshow/118500026.cms>

## **Energy**

### **Coal imports remains flat at 201 million tonnes in Apr-Dec period**

India's coal imports remained flat at 201.30 million tonnes (MT) in the April-December period of the ongoing financial year. The country's coal import was 201.52 MT in the year-ago period, according to the data compiled by mjunction services, a leading name in the e-auction space. Coal import in December declined to 19.28 MT over 23.35 MT in the corresponding month of the previous fiscal year.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/coal-imports-remains-flat-at-201-million-tonnes-in-apr-dec-period-125022300125\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/coal-imports-remains-flat-at-201-million-tonnes-in-apr-dec-period-125022300125_1.html)

### **India's natural gas import bill up 17% in April-January**

India's natural gas import bill surged 17.2% to \$12.9 billion during April–January of the current fiscal, compared to \$11.0 billion in the same period last year, driven by rising consumption, according to data from the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC). In January alone, the import bill increased by 8.3% to \$1.3 billion compared to January 2024.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/policy/economy-indias-natural-gas-import-bill-up-17-in-april-january-3758114/>

### **Biomass can be India's best bet for energy transition to hydrogen**

India's best bet for energy transition to hydrogen is using biomass, which it has available in sizeable quantity, said Maurits Van Tol, CEO of Catalyst Technologies, a division of Johnson Matthey (JM) one of the global leaders in sustainable technologies.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/biomass-can-be-indias-best-bet-for-energy-transition-to-hydrogen/article69254302.ece>

## **Telecom**

### **Trai proposal on private 5G network raises hopes again for big enterprises**

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) has suggested allowing Infosys, Tata Communications, and others to establish private 5G networks through direct spectrum access. If approved, this could reduce costs by 40% and significantly boost enterprise 5G adoption in India, posing competition to traditional telecom operators.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/telecom/telecom-news/trai-proposal-on-private-5g-network-raises-hopes-again-for-big-enterprises/articleshow/118512134.cms>

## **States**

### **Kerala attracts proposals worth Rs 1.53 trn from firms in investors' summit**

The two-day Invest Kerala Global Summit 2025 has witnessed investment proposals worth Rs 1.53 trillion from 374 companies, with the largest commitment of Rs 30,000 crore coming from the Adani Group.

[https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/kerala-attracts-proposals-worth-rs-1-53-trn-from-firms-in-investors-summit-125022300297\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/kerala-attracts-proposals-worth-rs-1-53-trn-from-firms-in-investors-summit-125022300297_1.html)

### **Maha govt to give additional Rs 50k subsidy for rural homes under PMAY**

The Maharashtra government will give an additional subsidy of Rs 50,000 for homes in rural areas under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, which will take the total funding to Rs 2.1 lakh per household, state minister Jayakumar Gore said on Sunday. The state rural development minister said Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has approved decision and provision for the subsidy has been made in the budget for 2025-26.

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/maha-govt-to-give-additional-rs-50k-subsidy-for-rural-homes-under-pmay-125022300652\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/maha-govt-to-give-additional-rs-50k-subsidy-for-rural-homes-under-pmay-125022300652_1.html)

### **Budget for FY26 to be tabled in Andhra assembly session commencing on February 24**

Andhra Pradesh state budget for the fiscal 2025-26 is to be tabled in the Assembly during its session that will commence on Monday. Governor S Abdul Nazeer will address the state legislature, comprising the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council on the opening day of the Assembly session while the Business Advisory Council (BAC) will decide on the duration of the session. According to a source from the Legislature, the budget is expected to be tabled on Friday, February 28.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/national/budget-for-fy26-to-be-tabled-in-andhra-assembly-session-commencing-on-february-24/article69253916.ece>

### **UP, Gujarat, Odisha continue fiscal consolidation despite populist schemes**

Uttar Pradesh is the largest as well as the poorest economy in terms of per capita income among the five major states that recently presented their Budgets for 2025-26. Yet, it continues to maintain a revenue surplus position despite announcing 92,000 new jobs, raising the salaries of 0.9 million outsourced workers, and providing free scooters to bright female students.

[https://www.business-standard.com/politics/up-gujarat-odisha-continue-fiscal-consolidation-despite-populist-schemes-125022300335\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/politics/up-gujarat-odisha-continue-fiscal-consolidation-despite-populist-schemes-125022300335_1.html)

### **PM Narendra Modi to inaugurate MP GIS on February 24 to boost investment**

The Madhya Pradesh Global Investors Summit (GIS) will begin in Bhopal on February 24. The two-day event aims to attract investment to the state. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the summit on Monday, while Union Home Minister Amit Shah will attend the closing ceremony on Tuesday. Over 200 top executives from Indian companies and representatives from global firms will participate in the GIS. Additionally, founders of over 20 unicorn startups will also attend.

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/pm-narendra-modi-to-inaugurate-mp-gis-on-february-24-to-boost-investment-125022300611\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/pm-narendra-modi-to-inaugurate-mp-gis-on-february-24-to-boost-investment-125022300611_1.html)

## **Healthcare**

### **India's chemical and pharmaceutical industry gains traction as Europe faces decline**

India is increasingly making a mark in the global pharmaceutical Contract Development and Manufacturing Organization (CDMO) sector while rapidly scaling up its production in fine chemicals, agrochemicals, and specialty chemicals, said a report by Nuvama. The report added that this growth is supported by government incentives and lower operational costs, making India an attractive alternative to Europe, where several factors--such as higher energy and labor costs--are eroding its competitive advantage. Multinational companies are shifting production to India, signaling a changing global landscape.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/indias-chemical-and-pharmaceutical-industry-gains-traction-as-europe-faces-decline-nuvama/article69254165.ece>

### **Govt reviewing infra of hospitals for setting up daycare cancer centres**

The government has started a survey to identify the gaps and review infrastructure of all district hospitals in order to implement the budget announcement of setting up daycare cancer centres in all health facilities over the next three years. The estimated expenditure for setting up these centres will be Rs 3,200 crore over the next three years, Union Health ministry officials said.

[https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/govt-reviewing-infra-of-hospitals-for-setting-up-daycare-cancer-centres-125022300198\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/govt-reviewing-infra-of-hospitals-for-setting-up-daycare-cancer-centres-125022300198_1.html)

### **Union Budget aims to build healthy economy with long-term vision: Mandaviya**

Praising the Union budget, Union Minister Dr Mansukh Mandaviya on Sunday said that the budget aims to make a healthy economy by setting a proper roadmap with a long-term vision. He said that time has changed in the last 10 years after Prime Minister Narendra Modi took over.

[https://www.business-standard.com/budget/news/union-budget-aims-to-build-healthy-economy-with-long-term-vision-mandaviya-125022300579\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/budget/news/union-budget-aims-to-build-healthy-economy-with-long-term-vision-mandaviya-125022300579_1.html)

## **External**

### **UAE eyes to invest in tourism, healthcare in Kerala, says minister**

In a sign of strengthening ties between India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the West Asian country has said that it is looking for investment opportunities in key sectors such as healthcare, tourism, food processing and technology in Kerala.

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/uae-eyes-to-invest-in-tourism-healthcare-in-kerala-says-minister-125022300287\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/uae-eyes-to-invest-in-tourism-healthcare-in-kerala-says-minister-125022300287_1.html)

### **India, UK to resume negotiations on proposed trade agreement from Feb 24**

After a gap of over eight months, India and the UK will resume negotiations for a proposed free trade agreement (FTA) here from February 24, an official said. UK's Secretary of State for Business and Trade Jonathan Reynolds will be here for resumption of the talks. He will hold a bilateral meeting with Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal, the official said.

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/india-uk-to-resume-negotiations-on-proposed-trade-agreement-from-feb-24-125022300211\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/india-uk-to-resume-negotiations-on-proposed-trade-agreement-from-feb-24-125022300211_1.html)

#### **EU leadership's visit to India next week will boost ties: MEA**

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen along with the entire EU College of Commissioners is all set to visit India next week. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) stated that the high-profile delegation intends to boost cooperation and enhance convergence between the European Union and India across crucial sectors.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/india-news/eu-leaderships-visit-to-india-next-week-will-boost-ties-mea/3757656/>

#### **India-ASEAN trade agreement review takes a slow pace**

The next round of negotiations for reviewing the India-ASEAN free trade agreement in goods is expected in April, though the pace of talks is slow, an official said. A free trade agreement in goods between India and the 10-nation bloc ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) was signed in 2009. The ASEAN trade deal came into force in January 2010. In August 2023, both sides announced a complete review of the existing agreement in goods by 2025.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/india-asean-trade-agreement-review-takes-a-slow-pace/article69254170.ece>