



March 07, 2025 – Friday

## Economy

### India's economic growth pegged at 6.5% for FY26 despite Trump tariff threat: Crisil

India is expected to maintain a steady 6.5% GDP growth in FY 2026, aided by normal monsoons and soft commodity prices. Key drivers include improved manufacturing, reduced inflation, tax benefits, and strong urban demand. Ongoing infrastructure development and economic reforms provide resilience amid global uncertainties.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/indias-economic-growth-pegged-at-6-5-for-fy26-despite-trump-tariff-threat-crisil/articleshow/118758347.cms>

### India leads global GenAI adoption, but women's participation remains low

India is emerging as a global leader in artificial intelligence (AI) adoption, yet women remain underrepresented in this rapidly growing field. According to data from online learning platform Coursera, while India ranks second globally in generative AI (GenAI) enrolments among women learners, they account for only 29.6 per cent of total GenAI enrolments in the country—despite representing 40 per cent of all learners on the platform.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/india-leads-global-genai-adoption-but-women-s-participation-remains-low-125030600478\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/india-leads-global-genai-adoption-but-women-s-participation-remains-low-125030600478_1.html)

### India's job market witnesses 41% growth in Feb on freshers hiring: Report

India's job market continued its upward momentum in February, witnessing 41 per cent year-on-year growth mainly driven by freshers hiring, a report said on Thursday. In February, fresher hiring rose by 26 per cent year-on-year (YoY) reflecting sustained employer demand for entry-level talent, according to data by foundit (formerly Monster APAC and ME), Asia's jobs and talent platform.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/india-s-job-market-witnesses-41-growth-in-feb-on-freshers-hiring-report-125030600929\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/india-s-job-market-witnesses-41-growth-in-feb-on-freshers-hiring-report-125030600929_1.html)

### Median salary of women job seekers in Tier-II & III cities up 34% in 3 yrs

India's job market is witnessing a significant transformation, with women from Tier-II and Tier-III cities stepping up their workforce participation and their median salary increasing by 34 per cent over the past three years, reflecting improved wage growth and expanding career prospects.

[https://www.business-standard.com/finance/personal-finance/median-salary-of-women-job-seekers-in-tier-ii-iii-cities-up-34-in-3-yrs-125030600834\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/finance/personal-finance/median-salary-of-women-job-seekers-in-tier-ii-iii-cities-up-34-in-3-yrs-125030600834_1.html)

## Finance

### Digital footprint-based lending for MSMEs launched

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday launched the new credit assessment model based on the scoring of digital footprints of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to accelerate credit appraisal and disbursement process. The credit assessment model for MSMEs based on digital footprints is expected to be a

significant improvement over the traditional assessment of credit eligibility based only on asset or turnover criteria. That will also cover MSMEs without a formal accounting system, the finance ministry said in a statement.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/business/sme-digital-footprint-based-lending-for-msmes-launched-3769772/>

#### **Govt should ease lending restrictions on NBFCs to improve credit for MSMEs: World Bank**

In a bid to enhance the availability of credit for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), the World Bank, in its latest report, has stated that the government should remove the interest cap on NBFCs to ease the lending restriction. The World Bank's report outlined several key recommendations aimed at strengthening Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs).

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/money-and-banking/govt-should-ease-lending-restrictions-on-nbfc-to-improve-credit-for-msmes-world-bank/article69297418.ece>

#### **Deeptech startups underfunded as 'significant' capital directed towards consumer internet firms**

India's frontier technology ecosystem, which focuses on deep tech startups and innovation, remains underfunded with a significant portion of capital directed towards consumer internet businesses, said a report by venture capital firm 3one4 Capital on Thursday. Even as the government has launched several programmes to boost deep-tech and frontier technology along with numerous innovation hubs and venture capital funding is also steadily increasing in deeptech startups, the report highlighted the need for more 'patient' capital from both private and government stakeholders to support long development cycles and high infrastructure needs.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/business/start-ups-deeptech-startups-underfunded-as-significant-capital-directed-towards-consumer-internet-firms-3769203/>

#### **Insolvency board mulls more regulatory changes**

Even as the amendments to the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) are getting delayed, the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) has made a slew of regulatory changes in the past 18 months to enhance the efficiency of the resolution process. "Until amendments to the IBC are carried out, it's only logical for the IBBI to make regulatory changes," an official source told FE. Going forward too, the IBBI will be making significant changes to regulations to improve the efficiency, transparency, and effectiveness of the resolution process, the person added.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/business/banking-finance-insolvency-board-mulls-more-regulatory-changes-3769726/>

#### **CBDT campaign leads to disclosure of over Rs 29,000 crore foreign assets**

More than 30,000 taxpayers have declared foreign assets worth Rs 29,208 crore and additional foreign income of Rs 1,090 crore for the assessment year (AY) 2024-25, according to Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) officials.

[https://www.business-standard.com/finance/personal-finance/cbd-t-campaign-leads-to-disclosure-of-over-rs-29-000-crore-foreign-assets-125030601183\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/finance/personal-finance/cbd-t-campaign-leads-to-disclosure-of-over-rs-29-000-crore-foreign-assets-125030601183_1.html)

#### **E-way bill generation slows to 14.7% in February, shows GSTN data**

The growth in e-way bills, or electronic permits, generated by businesses for transporting goods within and across states, slowed down to 14.7 per cent year-on-year (Y-o-Y) in February from 23.1 per cent growth in January, according to data released by the Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN) portal.

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/e-way-bill-generation-slows-to-14-7-in-february-shows-gstn-data-125030601004\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/e-way-bill-generation-slows-to-14-7-in-february-shows-gstn-data-125030601004_1.html)

#### **GST Council constitute GoM to examine levy of natural calamity cess by a particular state**

GST Council has constituted a Group of Ministers (GoM) to suggest recommendations for revenue mobilisation in case of natural calamities or disasters. It has reconstituted another GoM on analysis of revenue from GST. These actions have been taken on the basis of recommendation of GST Council meeting held on December 21, 2024. The GoM on revenue mobilisation in case of natural calamities or disaster will have Finance Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Suresh Khanna as convener.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/gst-council-constitute-gom-to-examine-levy-of-natural-calamity-cess-by-a-particular-state/article69299338.ece>

## Industry

### **62 pc of businesses expect QR code-focused initiatives to spur revenue growth: Uniqode report**

According to the 'State of QR Codes Report' by Uniqode, 62% of businesses expect higher sales in 2025 through QR code initiatives. These codes enhance customer engagement, aid in first-party data collection, and turn physical spaces into digital assets. Over 90% of businesses foresee increased QR adoption, supported by plans for more dynamic codes and AR integration.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/company/corporate-trends/62-pc-of-businesses-expect-qr-code-focused-initiatives-to-spur-revenue-growth-uniqode-report/articleshow/118758822.cms>

### **Automobile retail sales drop 7% in February amid slowing demand: Fada**

Automobile retail sales across categories, including passenger vehicles and two-wheelers, witnessed a drop of 7 per cent in February amid declining demand, dealers' body FADA said on Thursday. Overall retail sales in the domestic market stood at 18,99,196 units last month, registering a dip of 7 per cent compared to 20,46,328 units in the year-ago period.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/automobile-retail-sales-drop-7-in-february-amid-slowng-demand-fada-125030600549\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/automobile-retail-sales-drop-7-in-february-amid-slowng-demand-fada-125030600549_1.html)

### **Sports minister to hold chintan shivir on Olympic preparations from Mar 7-8**

Union sports minister Mansukh Mandaviya will chair a two-day meeting with his state-level counterparts, senior administrators, and key government officials here to "exchange ideas and craft a roadmap" for India's Olympic preparations. The March 7-8 gathering will be held at Kanha Shanti Vanam in the city. India is eyeing a double digit medal haul at the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics and is also bidding to host the 2036 Olympics for which a letter of intent has been sent to the International Olympic Committee.

[https://www.business-standard.com/sports/olympics/sports-minister-to-hold-chintan-shivir-on-olympic-preparations-from-mar-7-8-125030600387\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/sports/olympics/sports-minister-to-hold-chintan-shivir-on-olympic-preparations-from-mar-7-8-125030600387_1.html)

### **Ashwini Vaishnaw launches AI compute portal & dataset platform AIKosha**

Marking a year of the IndiaAI Mission, Union IT minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Thursday launched the IndiaAI compute portal and dataset platform AIKosha, among a slew of other initiatives under the IndiaAI Mission, aimed at improving access to AI and fostering innovation.

India BIT Model

[https://www.business-standard.com/technology/tech-news/ashwini-vaishnaw-launches-ai-compute-portal-dataset-platform-aikosha-125030600899\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/technology/tech-news/ashwini-vaishnaw-launches-ai-compute-portal-dataset-platform-aikosha-125030600899_1.html)

### **Women hosts make up 30% of Airbnb India, earned Rs 260 crore in 2024**

Indian women hosts, almost 30 per cent of Airbnb hosts in the country, have earned Rs 260 crore in 2024, shaping the future of hospitality with inclusivity and economic opportunities.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/women-hosts-make-up-30-of-airbnb-india-earned-rs-260-crore-in-2024-125030601086\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/women-hosts-make-up-30-of-airbnb-india-earned-rs-260-crore-in-2024-125030601086_1.html)

### **Cement demand to improve, US tariff impact seen for metal: Crisil**

After two years of a pricing slump, the cement sector is expected to see price hikes in the next financial year, said rating agency Crisil in its India Outlook FY26 report. The agency noted pricing pressure in the commodity sector, with aluminium also impacted by US trade tariffs.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/cement-demand-to-improve-us-tariff-impact-seen-for-metal-crisil-125030600938\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/cement-demand-to-improve-us-tariff-impact-seen-for-metal-crisil-125030600938_1.html)

### **Semicon Mission-2 in works, mulling to support chip designs: IT secy**

The government is ready with an outline of next phase of India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) and discussions are on internally for its rollout, a senior government official said on Thursday.

[https://www.business-standard.com/technology/tech-news/semicon-mission-2-in-works-mulling-to-support-chip-designs-it-secy-125030601025\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/technology/tech-news/semicon-mission-2-in-works-mulling-to-support-chip-designs-it-secy-125030601025_1.html)

### **Startups splurging on talent: Salaries gobble up two-thirds of revenue**

Growth-stage startups in the country are now spending as much as 68 per cent of their revenue on employee compensation part, emerging by far the biggest cost center in the business, said a report on Thursday discussing the evolving compensation trends in the Indian startup ecosystem.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/business/start-ups-startups-splurging-on-talent-salaries-gobble-up-two-thirds-of-revenue-3769565/>

## **Agriculture**

### **Coconut industry bets big on USFDA move to free the edible nut from food allergen tag**

Coconut product exporters are pinning hopes on the decision of US Food and Drug Administration in excluding coconuts from the classification of tree nuts under allergen labelling requirements. The US has rectified its classifications, a key hurdle has been removed.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/coconut-industry-bets-big-on-usfda-move-to-free-the-edible-nut-from-food-allergen-tag/article69297262.ece>

### **India not to pursue policy framework on agri marketing**

The Centre, which released a draft “National Policy Framework on Agricultural Marketing” in November last year amid the ongoing farmers’ protest in Punjab, may not pursue it further even as there has been no public opposition from any State other than Punjab. Since it was voluntary in nature, without it also States are free to issue such a framework on their own and in due course their real intent on the framework will be known to all, sources said.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/centre-not-to-pursue-the-policy-framework-on-agri-marketing/article69299374.ece>

## **Infrastructure**

### **DPIIT in talks with other Ministries on Budget promise of sharing Gati Shakti data with private sector**

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has initiated talks with various ministries and departments to take forward the Budget 2026 promise of allowing the private sector limited access to Gati Shakti data and maps, sources said.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/dpiit-in-talks-with-other-ministries-on-budget-promise-of-sharing-gati-shakti-data-with-private-sector/article69299172.ece>

## **Energy**

### **India shifting towards LNG term contracts despite falling spot prices: S&P**

India's demand for spot cargoes of liquefied natural gas (LNG) is expected to reduce as importers shift towards medium- and long-term contracts over the next two years, following multiple deals that come into effect as early as next month, S&P Global Commodity Insights said on Thursday. However, the higher reliance on term contracts could be poorly timed, as the market expects a flush of new supply that could drive spot prices lower, leaving Indian buyers exposed to more expensive contracted LNG, it pointed out in a note.

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/india-shifting-towards-lng-term-contracts-despite-falling-spot-prices-s-p-125030600922\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/india-shifting-towards-lng-term-contracts-despite-falling-spot-prices-s-p-125030600922_1.html)

### **India's renewable energy sector hit by weak demand, cancellations, report says**

India's renewable energy sector grapples with low demand for tenders, delays in power agreements, and project cancellations, jeopardizing its 2030 target of 500 GW non-fossil power capacity. With unsigned agreements totaling

over 40 GW and 38.3 GW of projects canceled from 2020 to 2024, investor confidence and low-cost financing are at risk, according to IEEFA.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/renewables/indias-renewable-energy-sector-hit-by-weak-demand-cancellations-report-says/articleshow/118759892.cms>

## Telecom

### DoT makes satellite equipment testing, certification mandatory ahead of satcom services launch

India will soon mandate testing and certification of satellite equipment, such as gateways and user terminals, for satcom services starting from August-end. This move comes as firms like Eutelsat-OneWeb, Jio-SES, and Starlink prepare to launch their services, awaiting spectrum allocation and regulatory approvals.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/telecom/telecom-policy/dot-makes-satellite-equipment-testing-certification-mandatory-ahead-of-satcom-services-launch/articleshow/118768451.cms>

### Telcos must evolve into digital orchestrators for B2B success

A majority of enterprise customers of telecom operators in India expect telcos to simplify the experience through digitalisation and automation, and go beyond connectivity to provide industrytailored solutions. They are also keen to collaborate with telcos to solve their business challenges, a survey by Capgemini Research Institute has indicated.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/telecom/telecom-policy/et-graphics-telcos-must-evolve-into-digital-orchestrators-for-b2b-success/articleshow/118768832.cms>

## States

### PM Modi pitches for year-round tourism in Uttarakhand to boost economy

Making a strong pitch for round the year tourism in Uttarakhand, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Thursday said there should be no off-season in the picturesque hill state and this would strengthen its economy in a big way.

[https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/pm-modi-pitches-for-year-round-tourism-in-uttarakhand-to-boost-economy-125030600353\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/pm-modi-pitches-for-year-round-tourism-in-uttarakhand-to-boost-economy-125030600353_1.html)

### TN to host a major aerospace and defence event in Chennai in October

Tamil Nadu will host a major aerospace and defence event in Chennai from October 7 to 9. The event, in partnership with BCI Aerospace, a global leader in business-to-business aerospace and defence events, will bring together top-tier international and Indian OEMs, suppliers, and manufacturers for pre-arranged business meetings and collaborations, State Industries Minister TRB Rajaa said a social media posting.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/national/tn-to-host-a-major-aerospace-and-defence-event-in-chennai-in-october/article69298777.ece>

## Healthcare

### NPPA fixes retail prices of 53 drug formulations, including painkillers

The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has fixed retail prices for 53 drug formulations, including those used to treat Type-2 diabetes, high cholesterol, bacterial infections, and painkillers. The regulatory body, which comes under the Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP), took the decision to revise the prices of the formulations during the authority's 130th meeting on February 25.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/nppa-fixes-retail-prices-of-53-drug-formulations-including-painkillers-125030601197\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/nppa-fixes-retail-prices-of-53-drug-formulations-including-painkillers-125030601197_1.html)

### Surge in fake medicines in retail markets leaving druggists distraught: Traders' body

The country has witnessed an alarming surge in counterfeit medicines flooding retail markets, a spike of nearly 50 per cent over and above the estimated figures from the COVID-19 years, according to the All India Organisation of Chemists and Druggists (AIOCD). The traders' body attributed this rise to a combination of factors, including consumers' preference for high-discount drugs, inadequate government vigilance, and "lenient" prohibitive laws.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/pharmaceuticals/surge-in-fake-medicines-in-retail-markets-leaving-druggists-distraught-traders-body/articleshow/118765250.cms>

#### **Centre draws up plan to add 200 cancer centres, 10k medical seats in FY26**

The Union health ministry has chalked out a tentative plan for establishing 200 day care cancer centres (DCCCs) and adding 10,000 medical seats in the next financial year (FY26) as part of the implementation of the government's Budget promises.

[https://www.business-standard.com/health/centre-considers-faculty-sharing-to-tackle-shortage-add-10k-medical-seats-125030601037\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/health/centre-considers-faculty-sharing-to-tackle-shortage-add-10k-medical-seats-125030601037_1.html)

#### **External**

#### **Team India seeks zero duty, business continuity amid US tariffs**

Indian government and companies are collaborating urgently to mitigate the impact of US President Trump's tariff threats by potentially reducing tariffs on US imports. Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal leads a delegation in Washington for Bilateral Trade Agreement talks, while sectors like electronics, auto components, and pharmaceuticals explore alternatives to ensure trade continuity with the US.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/team-india-seeks-zero-duty-business-continuity-amid-us-tariffs/articleshow/118768696.cms>

#### **India gears up for retaliation as US tariff threat looms**

Pankaj Chadha, chairman of the Engineering Exports Promotion Council, stated that if the US imposes a 25 per cent tariff on steel and aluminium imports starting March 12, Indian exporters will face significant setbacks. "We have not started it, but we are not going to sit back and take the punches. India will have to take reciprocal measures to deal with it," Chadha said.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/world-news/india-gears-up-for-retaliation-as-us-tariff-threat-looms/3769731/>

#### **US crude exports to India hit over 2-yr high in Feb amid Russia sanctions**

US exports of crude oil to India last month climbed to their highest in over two years, ship tracking data showed, as refiners in the country sought alternative supplies following tighter US sanctions on Russian producers and tankers.

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/us-crude-exports-to-india-hit-over-2-yr-high-in-feb-amid-russia-sanctions-125030600346\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/us-crude-exports-to-india-hit-over-2-yr-high-in-feb-amid-russia-sanctions-125030600346_1.html)

#### **India bought Rs 1.5 lakh crore worth of Russian oil since Ukraine war**

India, heavily reliant on oil imports, spent approximately Rs 1.5 lakh crore on Russian crude oil following the Ukraine war, lured by significant discounts due to Western sanctions. This shifted India's oil sourcing from the Middle East, leading Russia to become its top supplier. However, recent US sanctions reduced these imports, despite continued significant purchasing.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/india-bought-rs-1-5-lakh-crore-worth-of-russian-oil-since-ukraine-war/articleshow/118757763.cms>