

October 23, 2025 – Thursday

Economy

Finance Commission tenure extended by one month

The government extended the tenure of the 16th Finance Commission by one month to submit its award for tax devolution and grants for the next five years, as the consultation process had not concluded fully, sources told FE. The Commission, headed by Arvind Panagariya, was to submit its report by October 31, 2025. Panagariya was appointed as head of the Commission on December 31, 2023.
https://www.financialexpress.com/india-news/finance-commission-tenure-extended-by-one-month/4018454/

Revised guidelines likely by March to create desi Big Four

The govt is preparing a plan to boost large audit and consultancy firms. This initiative aims to overcome regulatory hurdles that prevent domestic companies from growing. The goal is to create firms comparable to global giants. Changes to rules are expected soon to facilitate mergers, partnerships, and easier global collaborations.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/consultancy-/-audit/revised-guidelines-likely-by-march-to-create-desi-big-four/articleshow/124747850.cms

Finance

Private banks reduce lending rates more than PSBs in current cycle

Following the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) rate-setting panel's decision to reduce the policy rate by 100 basis points (bps), the weighted average lending rates on fresh and outstanding rupee loans declined by 58 bps and 55 bps, respectively, till August, according to RBI data. Meanwhile, the weighted average domestic term deposit rates on fresh and outstanding deposits fell by 106 bps and 22 bps, respectively. Across bank groups, the transmission of rate cuts to lending rates was higher for private sector banks than for public sector banks. Private banks reduced rates on fresh and outstanding rupee loans by 76 bps and 63 bps, respectively, compared with 53 bps and 47 bps reductions by public sector banks.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/banking/private-banks-lending-rate-cut-vs-public-sector-banks-rbi-data-125102200623_1.html

WACR better aligned with repo rate amid improved liquidity: RBI report

The weighted average call rate (WACR) showed better alignment with the policy repo rate during September 16-October 16, compared to the previous month, according to the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) monthly report, 'State of the Economy,' released on Monday. Following the revised liquidity management framework announced on September 30, the WACR continues to serve as the operating target for monetary policy. The report has been authored by RBI staffers with guidance from Deputy Governor Poonam Gupta. The views in the report are those of the authors and not of RBI, it was clarified.
https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/rbi-report-wacr-aligned-with-repo-rate-liquidity-management-framework-125102200722_1.html

SFBs boost secured lending as they move towards universal bank status

Small finance banks (SFBs) aspiring to become universal banks have increased the share of secured assets in their loan portfolios to comply with the transition norms on diversified portfolios. Three SFBs — AU, Ujjivan, and Jana — which are eligible to convert to universal banks, reported a higher share of secured assets in their July–September quarter results. While AU has already received the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) in-principle approval for conversion, the applications of Jana and Ujjivan are still pending with the regulator.
https://www.business-standard.com/finance/news/small-finance-banks-secured-loans-universal-bank-conversion-125102200773_1.html

P-notes set for a quiet burial

Sebi curbs put the final nail in its coffin over 30 years after launch. Investments through P-notes have been on the decline. In FY07, investments through this route stood at a whopping 44% of the total investments made by foreign portfolio investors. In FY25, it crashed to just 1.8%.
https://www.financialexpress.com/market/p-notes-set-for-a-quiet-burial-4018355/

Debt MFs witness ₹1 lakh cr outflow in September on withdrawals from liquid, money market funds

Fixed-income mutual funds witnessed a massive net outflow of ₹1.02 lakh crore in September following modest redemptions of ₹7,980 crore in the preceding month, primarily driven by large institutional withdrawals from liquid and money market funds. Out of 16 debt categories, 12 of them witnessed net outflows during the month under review. The major quantum of net outflows was witnessed by categories such as liquid, money market and ultra short duration funds.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/markets/debt-mfs-witness-1-lakh-cr-outflow-in-september-on-withdrawals-from-liquid-money-market-funds/article70189347.ece

Industry

Big plans in the works for small businesses: MSME reforms by December

A fresh round of reforms could be rolled out soon for the micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) sector. The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) is working with the MSME ministry and finance ministry on steps to reduce the tax and compliance burden of such units and improve their cost-competitiveness, it is learnt. The government may announce these initiatives by end of the year. According to the documents reviewed by Business Standard, the exercise follows a three-tier format, beginning with cluster-level workshops, followed by zone-level conferences in seven cities in November, and culminating in a national conference later in the year.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/pm-modi-to-unveil-next-generation-msme-reforms-by-early-december-125102200713_1.html

Govt to launch inspections to enforce new edible oil reporting norms

The government on Wednesday said it will launch inspection drives to verify compliance with new edible oil regulations as it seeks to tighten oversight of a sector vital to the country's food security. The Food Ministry said the field checks are aimed at enforcing stricter reporting requirements under an amended order that mandates all edible oil manufacturers, processors and distributors to register with authorities and submit monthly production data.
https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/govt-to-launch-inspections-to-enforce-new-edible-oil-reporting-norms-125102200881_1.html

Govt expands definition of indigenous tech under gasification scheme

The Ministry of Coal has broadened the definition of "indigenous technology" under its financial support scheme for coal and lignite gasification projects. It has allowed technologies adapted through technical collaboration or technology transfer to be considered indigenous provided they demonstrate that their significant development, adaptation or innovation occurs within India, and resulting technology is commercially viable under Indian conditions.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/coal-gasification-scheme-indigenous-technology-definition-expanded-125102200525_1.html

India's smartphone market rises 3% to 48.4 mn units in Jul-Sep quarter

India's smartphone market grew 3 per cent year-on-year (YoY) in the third quarter of the calendar year 2025, reaching 48.4 million units shipped, as per the latest research from Omdia, which cautioned that despite early momentum, gains are unlikely to sustain into a strong year-end. The modest growth was driven by a wave of new launches in July and August, retail incentivisation and an earlier festive season that pulled forward inventory flows, Omdia said. Vendors filled the channels with new stocks in expectation of a high-demand festive period.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/india-s-smartphone-market-up-3-in-jul-sep-quarter-as-festive-outlook-dulls-125102200448_1.html

India's auto deals hit $4.6 bn in Q3, driven by outbound M&A, EV growth

India's automotive sector recorded its strongest quarter in over a year, with 30 transactions valued at $4.6 billion, according to Grant Thornton Bharat Q3 2025 Automotive Dealtracker. While deal volumes remained consistent with the previous quarter, values surged sharply. It was largely driven by Tata Motors' $3.8-billion acquisition of Iveco SPA, marking one of India's largest outbound automotive transactions to date. Excluding this deal, values fell 36 per cent over the last quarter, signalling that large strategic bets continue to define overall deal momentum.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/auto/india-automotive-deals-hit-4-6-bn-in-q3-2025-tata-motors-iveco-tops-125102200443_1.html

Supply chain, e-waste issues can hit critical mineral plan

A new government incentive plan for critical mineral recycling faces cautious reception from industry players. Challenges like informal e-waste collection and supply chain gaps could hinder its success. The plan aims to boost domestic extraction of vital metals from batteries and gadgets. Industry experts believe technology acquisition and workforce development are crucial for realizing the plan's potential.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/indl-goods/svs/metals-mining/supply-chain-e-waste-issues-can-hit-critical-mineral-plan/articleshow/124746207.cms

Agriculture

Fertiliser imports surge 75% in H1, urea shipments up 138%

In anticipation of robust demand on surplus monsoon and robust winter crops sowing, the imports of urea, di-ammonium phosphate (DAP) and NPK variants of soil nutrients have surged in the first half of the current fiscal year. This signals the government's keenness to ensure adequate supply of fertilizers next season. In the last kharif season, there were several reports of shortage of urea, as the production and imports could not match the demand, which spiked over 5% on year.
https://www.financialexpress.com/policy/economy-fertiliser-imports-surge-75-in-h1-urea-shipments-up-138-4018400/

NABARD plans to extend weather-linked insurance to all farmers

National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) is in discussion with Agriculture Insurance Company of India (AICIL) to extend the coverage of weather-linked insurance products to all farmers. Currently, insurance products are available only for crop farmers. "We consider developing insurance products linked to actual crop loss. While such insurance already exists, expanding it to cover farmers comprehensively could be highly beneficial," a senior official told FE.
https://www.financialexpress.com/policy/economy-nabard-plans-to-extend-weather-linked-insurance-to-all-farmers-4018376/

Infrastructure

Railways mulling annuity model to boost investment and infra development

In a bid to boost investment in the railway sector, the Ministry of Railways is considering the possibility of adopting a model similar to the Hybrid Annuity Model (HAM) and bidding out projects on a concession basis under it, according to people in the know of the matter. "Initial discussions have begun in this regard, and there's an effort to

identify what projects can be bid out in this mode along with development of a potential pipeline of projects," a senior government official said.
https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/railways-may-adopt-hybrid-annuity-model-to-draw-private-investment-125102200734_1.html

NHAI to roll out survey vehicles to assess road quality nationwide

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) will deploy network survey vehicles (NSVs) across 23 states, covering 20,933 km of national highways, to collect and analyse information about road conditions, the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways said on Wednesday. The NSV system is a specialised infrastructure management tool comprising vehicles equipped with advanced sensors and data acquisition systems designed to support decisions on road maintenance.
https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/nhai-to-roll-out-survey-vehicles-to-assess-road-quality-nationwide-125102200780_1.html

Call to place India in top five shipbuilding nations by 2047

Kochi Shipbuilding Summit 2025, jointly organised by Cochin Shipyard Limited and the Centre for Public Policy Research (CPPR) has set the stage for India's emergence as a global shipbuilding leader by 2047. The summit highlighted the maritime potential and called for using the country's industry, workforce, and policies to become one of the world's top five shipbuilding nations by 2047.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/logistics/call-to-place-india-in-top-five-shipbuilding-nations-by-2047/article70190033.ece

Coworking firms scale up, tapping demand for bespoke office solutions

India's co-working landscape is moving beyond plug-and-play offices towards highly customised, sector-specific environments that blend design, technology, security, and brand-building. Leading operators like TableSpace, Awfis, IndiQube, WeWork, The Executive Centre, IWG, and more are offering bespoke solutions across industries — finance and technology to consulting and healthcare — while commanding premiums for flexibility and brand alignment.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/co-working-firms-scale-up-tapping-demand-for-bespoke-office-solutions-125102200588_1.html

Energy

Over 40 GW of RE projects in process of signing power purchase pacts

With over 40 gigawatt of renewable energy projects being in advanced stages of signing power purchase pacts, India's non-fossil fuel based power generation capacity is soon to reach 300 GW, an official statement said on Wednesday. As on September 30, India's non-fossil fuel based capacity stood at 256 GW including 50 GW of large hydro and 8.78 GW nuclear power. According to the statement, more than 40 gigawatt of renewable energy projects are in advanced stages of signing power purchase agreements, power sale agreement and securing transmission connectivity.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/over-40-gw-of-renewable-energy-projects-in-advanced-stages-of-ppa-signing-125102200503_1.html

Govt says India's renewable energy sector has entered consolidation phase

The government on Tuesday said India's renewable energy sector has entered a phase of consolidation, moving away from rapid capacity expansion towards deeper system reforms, including grid integration, dispatchable clean energy architecture, and market reforms. It said that before proceeding with large-scale bids for renewable projects, enforcement of Renewable Purchase Obligation (RPO), upgrading transmission lines, and using technology for grid integration remain top priorities. This comes amid global headwinds such as supply-chain disruptions, fluctuating module prices, and tighter financing conditions that have slowed commissioning timelines.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/india-renewable-energy-consolidation-phase-grid-integration-2030-125102200498_1.html

Govt panel flags transmission tower failures before end of design life

A committee of experts, led by the Central Electricity Authority (CEA), has flagged the issue of failures in extra heavy voltage (EHV) transmission towers before the end of their design life. The issue was raised during a meeting of the Standing Committee of Experts, last month, to deliberate on the cause of failures in transmission line towers during January to June, 2025.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/govt-flags-transmission-tower-failures-before-end-of-design-life/article70189970.ece

Clean power purchase obligations, tech use for grid integration priority, says ministry

India's renewable energy sector is moving fast. The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy is focusing on key areas. These include ensuring states buy renewable power, improving power lines, and using technology for grid integration. These steps are crucial before new large renewable energy projects are announced.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/renewables/clean-power-purchase-obligations-tech-use-for-grid-integration-priority-says-ministry/articleshow/124746584.cms

Falling production from KG-D6 drags down national gas output

India's natural gas production is declining, primarily due to falling output from Reliance-BP's KG-D6 fields. This drop, coupled with a decrease from ONGC's fields, has led to a 3% reduction in national output. Consequently, domestic consumption has also weakened, impacting LNG imports.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/falling-production-from-kg-d6-drags-down-national-gas-output/articleshow/124748064.cms

States

Branded hotel rooms in Northeast to double by 2030

Northeast India is transforming with a significant increase in branded hotels. Over 3,000 new rooms are planned by 2030, with Assam leading the expansion. This growth is fueled by improved infrastructure and rising tourist numbers. Despite this, the region still holds vast untapped potential for further development and investment.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/hotels-/-restaurants/branded-hotel-rooms-in-northeast-to-double-by-2030/articleshow/124747662.cms

Ladakh’s eco-tourism, traditional crafts get a lift from new GST reforms

The sweeping GST rationalisation reforms that took effect this Navratri have benefits for all walks of people in some form or the other. The recent GST reduction across a wide variety of products and services will, similar to other states and UTs, also impact Ladakh's rich economy, bringing relief to artisans, farmers, and small enterprises. Together, these reforms will support livelihood generation, cultural preservation, and the sustainable growth of Ladakh's economy.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/ladakhs-eco-tourism-traditional-crafts-get-a-lift-from-new-gst-reforms/articleshow/124737380.cms

Healthcare

CDSCO issues draft guidelines to regulate medical device software

To align India’s regulatory framework for medical device software with globally harmonised practices, the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) has released a draft guidance document for grant of licence to manufacture or import device software for sale and distribution in the country. The CDSCO has broadly classified medical software into two categories. The first includes software integrated into a physical medical device — known as Software in a Medical Device (SiMD) — such as insulin pumps.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/cdsco-draft-guidelines-medical-device-software-regulation-ai-ml-125102200764_1.html

Regulator to digitally monitor supply chain of cough syrups

In a groundbreaking effort to enhance public health safety, India's drug regulatory authority has unveiled a digital tracking system for cough syrup supplies. This initiative comes in response to alarming cases of harmful cough syrups

surfacing in the market. The revamped Online National Drugs Licensing System now requires pharmaceutical manufacturers of solvents to register and obtain licenses through this portal.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/pharmaceuticals/regulator-to-digitally-monitor-supply-chain-of-cough-syrups/articleshow/124745404.cms

External

PM Modi to attend ASEAN Summit virtually this year, Malaysia's Anwar Ibrahim confirms

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will participate in the 47th ASEAN Summit virtually due to India's Deepavali celebrations, as confirmed by Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar is expected to attend the summit in person. Malaysia reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening bilateral ties and ASEAN-India cooperation.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/pm-modi-will-not-travel-to-kuala-lumpur-for-asean-summit-malaysias-anwar-ibrahim-confirms/articleshow/124751027.cms

Trade differences remain between India and EU after 14th round of talks

Differences persisted between India and the European Union (EU) in their discussion earlier this month on the proposed free-trade agreement (FTA), leaving no scope for a substantial breakthrough. In the 14th round of negotiations, which took place in Brussels, the disagreements related to market access for goods, and also investment, trade, and sustainable development. However, progress was made in consolidating the text of the negotiations, according to the report.
https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/shreya-nandi-india-eu-story-125102200675_1.html

West Asia raises toast to Indian teas, offsets export losses to Russia, US

Iran and Iraq emerged as key drivers of India's tea exports during the first eight months of this calendar year, offsetting a decline in shipments to major markets like Russia. According to the latest data from the Tea Board of India, Iraq was the top buyer of Indian tea, at 35.94 million kg (mkg) between January and August this year, up from 30.99 mkg in the same period last year. Export to Iran rose to 6.39 mkg, against 6.30 mkg last year. However, exporters point out that teas bound for Iran were mostly routed through Dubai, one of the largest trading hubs.
https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/iran-iraq-drive-india-tea-exports-offset-decline-in-russia-125102200330_1.html

Indonesia's suspension of Indian groundnut imports may end soon

An Indonesian team is scheduled to visit India this month-end to end the impasse over the suspension of Indian groundnut imports by Jakarta. Indonesia suspended the import of groundnuts from India from September 3, following a notification issued on August 27. The suspension followed reports of the presence of aflatoxins, seen as molds in grains and oilseeds, in Indian groundnuts.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/indonesian-team-to-visit-india-to-end-groundnut-imports-impasse/article70189735.ece

India-UK FTA boosts trade: September imports jump 54%, exports rise 12%

The India–UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA), signed on July 24, 2025, aims to expand bilateral trade through tariff cuts and broader market access. However, the induced effects from the FTA are already influencing India-UK trade relations even before ratification. Latest trade data show India's imports from the UK jumped about 54 per cent from $684 million in September 2024 to $1,053 million in September 2025.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/data-stories/data-focus/india-uk-fta-boosts-trade-september-imports-jump-54-exports-rise-12/article70189680.ece

India-led solar project powers 12 public buildings in 10 Pacific nations

India, in collaboration with the United Nations, has extended green energy solutions to 10 Pacific island nations by providing solar power to 12 public buildings, the Indian mission to the UN has said. The initiative was implemented under the $ 150 million India-UN Development Partnership Fund. The Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations in a social media post on Tuesday said the Fund is "offering green solutions".

https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/india-led-solar-project-powers-12-public-buildings-in-10-pacific-nations-125102200504_1.html

Govt calls for 'open house' to discuss steel import issues with industry

The government on Monday called for an "open house" to discuss issues related to steel imports with industry stakeholders. Companies and associations may present their issues in the open house scheduled for October 27 in the national capital, the Ministry of Steel said in a statement. The development comes at a time when domestic players have been complaining about cheap imports affecting their competitiveness. The Reserve Bank India (RBI) has also noted that steel imports have seen a surge, largely driven by lower import prices. It has also called for policy support to boost the competitiveness of domestic steel production.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/govt-calls-for-open-house-to-discuss-steel-import-issues-with-industry-125102200732_1.html

India rejects China-backed WTO investment facilitation proposal

India has opposed at the World Trade Organization (WTO) the China-led proposal for an 'investment facilitation for development agreement', which seeks to put in place a pre-investment review or appeal system through an independent body to screen all investments. At a General Council Meeting on October 7, India cited systemic and legal implications of the proposal and said the supporters of the proposal had tried to exert pressure rather than meaningfully engage on the issue.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/india-rejects-china-backed-wto-investment-facilitation-proposal/articleshow/124747765.cms