

(This document comprises news clips from various media in which Balmer Lawrie is mentioned, news related to GOI and PSEs, and news from the verticals that we do business in. This will be uploaded on intranet and website every Monday.)

## India to grow at 7.7% in 2018-19: IMF

India's growth is expected to rebound to 7.2 per cent in the 2017-18 fiscal and 7.7 per cent in 2018-19 after disruptions caused by demonetisation, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said today, while recommending the removal of long-standing structural bottlenecks to enhance market efficiency. The temporary disruptions (primarily to private consumption) caused by cash shortages accompanying the currency exchange initiative are expected to gradually dissipate in 2017 as cash shortages ease, the IMF said in its regional economic outlook. Such disruptions would also be offset by tailwinds from a favourable monsoon season and continued progress in resolving supply-side bottlenecks, the IMF said. The investment recovery is expected to remain modest and uneven across sectors as deleveraging takes place and industrial capacity utilisation picks up, it noted. "In India, growth is projected to rebound to 7.2 per cent in FY2017-18 and further to 7.7 per cent in FY2018-19," the IMF said.

*The Hindu Business Line - 10.05.2017*

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/india-to-grow-at-77-in-201819-imf/article9687073.ece>

## Retail inflation hits a low of 2.99% in April

Retail inflation fell sharply to 2.99 per cent in April, from 3.89 per cent in March, due to lower cost of food items, including pulses and vegetables that showed a deflationary trend. The consumer price index (CPI) based retail inflation for March 2017 was revised slightly upwards to 3.89 per cent, from 3.81 per cent recorded previously. CPI inflation stood at 5.47 per cent in April 2016. Pulses and products recorded a sharp fall in prices in April, with a deflation of 15.94 per cent, while vegetable prices fell by 8.59 per cent. The corresponding figures for March read (-)12.42 per cent and (-)7.24 per cent. In the fuel and light category, the inflation reading in April stood at 6.13 per cent, higher than 5.56 per cent in March. Price of fruits grew at 3.78 per cent in April, slower than 9.35 per cent in March, showed data from the ministry of statistics and programme

## India's factory output dips in March

India's factory output growth slowed to 2.7 per cent in March on the back of poor manufacturing performance in the new Index of Industrial Production (IIP) with revised base year of 2011-12, which was released here by the government on Friday. According to data released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, the IIP had recorded a growth of 5.5 per cent in March 2016, whereas it only grew by 1.9 per cent in February 2017. The IIP base year has been changed to ensure that it remains more relevant in the years that it is operational, Chief Statistician of India T.C.A. Ananth said at a joint briefing with Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) Secretary Ramesh Abhishek. "The objective is to converge more in line with the current consumption and production pattern of the country," he said, adding that the DIPP and the Ministry Of Statistics and Programme Implementation coordinated closely for the change.

*Business Standard - 12.05.2017*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/india-s-factory-output-dips-in-march-roundup-117051201442\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/india-s-factory-output-dips-in-march-roundup-117051201442_1.html)

## New series of WPI, IIP to be released on Friday

The government will release on Friday the new series of Index of Industrial Production as well as Wholesale Price Index, with 2011-12 as the base year, so as to map economic activities more accurately. The monthly WPI for April under the new series will be released on May 12 instead of May 15, the Commerce Ministry said in a statement. The data for both the indices will be released at a joint press conference for the revision of base year from 2004-05 to 2011-12. It will be addressed by top brass of both the ministries -- commerce and statistics. A high-level panel had firmed up the methodology for the IIP with new base year of 2011-12. The change in baseline for the IIP and WPI is expected to bring in more accuracy in mapping the level of economic activity and calculating other numbers like national

implementation (MOSPI), which were released on Friday. For cereals and products, the rate of price rise in April, at 5.06 per cent, was lower than 5.38 per cent in the previous month.

*The Times of India* - 12.05.2017

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/retail-inflation-hits-a-low-of-2-99-in-april/articleshow/58646117.cms>

## **WPI revision to 2011-12 base calls for new GDP estimates: Pronab Sen**

The government will have to come out with new GDP estimates with a 2011-12 base since it has revised the index to capture wholesale inflation, former chairman of the National Statistical Commission Pronab Sen has said. This is so because the wholesale price index is used as a deflator for many sectors of the economy for estimating real GDP by the statistics office. The earlier GDP estimates were based on inflation calculated on a 2004-05 base. The government on Friday released a new back series of factory output and wholesale inflation after revising the base year for calculating the indicators to 2011-12 from 2005-05. The two sets of data painted a healthy picture of the economy, with the WPI growing at a slower rate as per the new base and industrial production improving over time. In 2016-17, WPI inflation accelerated 1.7 per cent in the revised series, compared with 3.7 per cent as per the 2004-05 base. On the new WPI series, Sen said the slowdown in inflation is surprising because the only change is due to new products.

*The Economic Times* - 15.05.2017

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/wpi-revision-to-2011-12-base-calls-for-new-gdp-estimates-pronab-sen/articleshow/58674689.cms>

## **Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan inaugurates National Conclave on 'Skill Development Initiatives in Hydrocarbon Sector' at Bhubaneswar**

Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Hon'ble Minister of State (I/C), Petroleum & Natural Gas, Government of India, inaugurated a National Conclave on 'Skill Development Initiatives in the Hydrocarbon Sector' here today to coincide with the first foundation day of the Skill Development Institute (SDI), Bhubaneswar. Senior officers of the oil Industries, academicians, consultants and training partners in skills industry, senior industry members from various part of the country as well as State, etc., took part in this national conclave. Among others Mr. Verghese Cherian, Chairman and Director (HR), SDI, Bhubaneswar, Mr. B. Roy,

accounts. The Central Statistics Office (CSO) has already changed the base year for the country's national accounts, including the gross domestic product (GDP) and the gross value addition (GVA).

*The Hindustan Times* - 09.05.2017

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/business-news/india-to-unveil-new-iip-wpi-series-on-friday/story-BL3AHUo9xJiYsYqmsNjdwI.html>

## **Road to Swadeshi! PMO giving final touches to big 'Buy Indian' policy**

Buy Indian and Make in India – the government will bring out a full-fledged 'price preference' policy favouring Indian-owned companies. The policy, likely to be finalised by end of May, is being driven by the PMO and is aimed at boosting Indian enterprises across sectors. Preferential pricing is expected to allow additional time to Indian-owned bidding companies so that they can match the lowest bid in case the latter was made by an entity that's partly Indian-owned or mostly foreign-owned. Top government officials, who spoke off record, told ET that the new price preference policy will help Indian enterprises that apply for any government purchase/tender. The other major policy change in the works will involve compulsory 'value addition' – mandating and incentivising use of local components in every industry and every procurement area. Both proposals – 'price preference' and 'value addition' – are part of the larger plan of the Modi government to boost production in India by Indian companies, officials told ET.

*The Economic Times* - 13.05.2017

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/road-to-swadeshi-pmo-giving-final-touches-to-big-buy-indian-policy/articleshow/58651467.cms>

## **Criteria set for private company heads to join PSUs**

Private candidates applying for top-level jobs at Public Sector Companies will need to furnish their company's audited turnover, specify their Cost to Company (CTC) and also write a 400-word note on themselves. This is part of a new application form that Public Sector Enterprises Board (PSEB) is bringing out with effect from June 1 to enable private sector individuals to apply for board-level positions at the Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs), nearly two dozen of whom are headless as of now. The Prime Minister-led Appointments Committee of Cabinet takes the call on PSU top-level appointments. Last year, the Union Cabinet had decided to open up CPSE senior-level posts for

Director (HR), OIL, Mr. D. D. Mishra, Director (HR), ONGC, Mr. Pushp Joshi, Director (HR), HPCL, Mr. V C Bhandare, Director (HR), EIL, Mr. N. N. Rao, CEO, SDI, Bhubaneswar were also present at the occasion. Oil industry's first Skill Development Institute in Odisha's capital was inaugurated on this day last year. The institute, promoted by public sector oil companies, IndianOil, ONGC, GAIL, BPCL, HPCL, OIL, EIL and Balmer Lawrie, under the aegis of MoP&NG, is managed by IndianOil in support of the Skill India Mission of Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi.

*Orissa Diary - 09.05.2017*

<https://orissadiary.com/png-minister-dharmendra-pradhan-inaugurates-national-conclave-skill-development-initiatives-hydrocarbon-sector-bhubaneswar/>

### **7CPC: Centre extends time limit to receive, dispose anomalies**

The time limit to receive and dispose of pay-related anomalies of central government employees has been extended by the Centre by three months. The deadline to resolve any discrepancy arising out of the implementation of Seventh Central Pay Commission (7CPC) reports will be November 15, instead of August 15, an order issued by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) said. The Centre has accepted most of the recommendations of the 7th Pay Commission, to be implemented from January 1, 2016. "The time limit for receipt of anomalies is extended by three months from the date of expiry of receiving anomalies i.e. from February 15, 2017 to May 15, 2017," the DoPT order issued last week said. The DoPT had last year asked all central government departments to set up committees to look into various pay related anomalies. The anomaly committees were to be formed at two levels-- national and departmental--consisting of representatives of the official side and the staff side of the national council and the departmental council respectively.

*The Times of India - 11.05.2017*

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/7cpc-centre-extends-time-limit-to-receive-dispose-anomalies/articleshow/58626052.cms>

### **Consumption of petroleum products display growth of economy – Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan**

Union Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas, Dharmendra Pradhan, inaugurated the two-day national seminar on 'production productivity for sustainability in coal and power sector'

the private sector to broad base the catchment for these positions and take advantage of domain expertise. But in absence of clear criterion, nearly 75 top posts in PSUs have fallen vacant, including the top posts of many Chairpersons/Managing Directors in PSUs like ONGC, Coal India Limited, NHPC, IRCTC, Northern Coalfields Ltd, etc. Director level posts are also vacant at MMTC Ltd, SAIL, GAIL and NTPC.

*The Economic Times - 15.05.2017*

[http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/jobs/criteria-set-for-private-company-heads-to-join-psus/articleshow/58674925.cms?utm\\_source=contentofinterest&utm\\_medium=text&utm\\_campaign=cppst](http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/jobs/criteria-set-for-private-company-heads-to-join-psus/articleshow/58674925.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst)

### **I-T Dept. launches new facility to link Aadhaar with PAN**

The Income-Tax Department has launched a new e-facility to link a person's Aadhaar with the Permanent Account Number (PAN), a mandatory procedure for filing I-T returns now. The department's e-filing website — <https://incometaxindiaefiling.gov.in/> — has created a new link on its homepage making it "easy" to link the two unique identities of an individual. The link requires a person to punch in his PAN number, Aadhaar number and the "exact name as given in the Aadhaar card". "After verification from the UIDAI (Unique Identification Authority of India), the linking will be confirmed. In case of any minor mismatch in Aadhaar name provided, Aadhaar OTP (one time password) will be required," the department said in its advisory to taxpayers and individuals. The OTP will be sent on the registered mobile number and email of the individual. It urged them to ensure that the date of birth and gender in PAN and Aadhaar are exactly the same, to ensure linking without failure. "There is no need to login or be registered on e-filing website (of the I-T department). This facility can be used by anyone to link their Aadhaar with PAN," it said.

*The Hindu Business Line - 11.05.2017*

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/policy/it-dept-launches-new-facility-to-link-aadhaar-with-pan/article9693128.ece>

### **Petrol pumps call off proposed Sunday off**

All petrol pumps in the country, which had announced a weekly 'holiday' from May 14 and work on a single shift from May 15, called off their proposed agitation on Saturday, an official statement said here. Federation of All

organised in New Delhi by World Confederation of Productivity Science (India), an organisation dedicated for productivity movement in India. Pradhan in his keynote address lauded the new initiatives taken by Government of India in the last three years in various sectors like coal, power, renewable energy, mines, petroleum and national gas, and also called for collective effort for further enhancement of productivity across all sectors in India. He explained that energy is the backbone of growth for every economy, and in India, growth is primarily dependent on growth and productivity of our agriculture sector, for which Government is committed to make available every form of energy to them.

*The Free Press Journal - 08.05.2017*

<http://www.freepressjournal.in/business/consumption-of-petroleum-products-display-growth-of-economy-union-minister-dharmendra-pradhan/1064144>

### **OilMin keen on policy to use gas for power generation**

The oil ministry today pitched for formulation of a policy that will encourage use of natural gas for power generation, in a bid to rectify a situation where the fuel has been neglected for long. There are 24,000 megawatt of gas-based power stations languishing as the current regime does not favour electricity generated from imported gas. Speaking at a Ficci seminar, Oil Secretary K D Tripathi said the government had last year decided to make India a gas-based economy as natural gas is one of the cleanest and most environment-friendly fuels with extremely low carbon dioxide emission compared to others such as coal and oil. But gas still is not the preferred fuel for power generation. "We perhaps have to orient our policies to produce more and more power from gas, particularly near metro areas which have concerns about pollution," he said. He held that availability of gas is not a dampener, but tariff related issues hamper use of the fuel in power generation. Of the 139.37 million standard cubic metres per day of domestically-produced gas and imported LNG available in 2016-17, less than 32 mmscmd was consumed by the power sector.

*DNA - 11.05.2017*

<http://www.dnaindia.com/money/report-oilmin-keen-on-policy-to-use-gas-for-power-generation-2434952>

### **India's oil boom stalls**

India's gasoline consumption has flattened out in recent months after tremendous growth between 2014 and 2016. India's motorists consumed 581,000 barrels of gasoline per day between February and April, according to the Petroleum

Maharashtra Petrol Dealers Association (FAMPEDA) President Uday Lodh said that in view of a review meeting called by Oil Marketing Companies on Wednesday, May 17, it has been decided to postpone the agitation till further notice. The Consortium of Indian Petroleum Dealers along with FAMPEDA was planning to launch the 'Cost Cutting Module' in Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Haryana.

*The Economic Times - 13.05.2017*

[http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/petrol-pumps-call-off-proposed-sunday-off/articleshow/58658756.cms?utm\\_source=contentofinterest&utm\\_medium=text&utm\\_campaign=cppst](http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/petrol-pumps-call-off-proposed-sunday-off/articleshow/58658756.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst)

### **Merits of daily fuel price rejig**

The government's move to change petrol and diesel prices on a daily basis - currently being tested in five cities - is likely to improve the marketing margins of PSU oil retailers, according to an India Ratings study. In fact, after the launch of the pilot this month in five cities - Puducherry, Visakhapatnam, Udaipur, Jamshedpur and Chandigarh - prices have fallen. In Jamshedpur, petrol prices have fallen Rs 1.2 per litre to Rs 68.06 per litre and diesel prices by Rs 1.43 per litre to Rs 58.83 per litre. The government is keen to extend the norm to other parts of the country after the oil marketing PSUs assess their experience in the five cities. The India Ratings report said the daily revision would increase the marketing margins of state-run Indian Oil Corporation, Hindustan Petroleum and Bharat Petroleum and has cited three reasons for this. First, this gives companies greater flexibility to pass on crude price volatility to consumers; second, it lowers the need for steep hikes as in the fortnightly pricing regime thus lowering the possibility of political intervention; and finally, it lowers the chances of hoarding by dealers in anticipation of a hike.

*The Telegraph - 10.05.2017*

[https://www.telegraphindia.com/1170511/jsp/business/story\\_150905.jsp](https://www.telegraphindia.com/1170511/jsp/business/story_150905.jsp)

### **Fuel demand in April up 3 per cent from last year**

India's fuel demand rose more than 3 percent in April compared with the same month last year. Consumption of fuel, a proxy for oil demand, totalled 16.79 million tonnes, data

Planning and Analysis Cell at the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas. Gasoline consumption rose by 4 percent compared with the same period a year earlier, a sharp slowdown from the 14 percent increase between 2015 and 2016. Gasoline consumption growth has been slowing since the middle of 2016 after surging for the previous two years. Consumption growth for most other fuels used for cooking and transportation has also been slowing for the last nine months. Demand for liquefied petroleum gas and kerosene used for cooking, heating and lighting as well as diesel used for transport all show signs of levelling off or actually falling in the first four months of 2017.

*Business Standard - 13.05.2017*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-s-oil-boom-stalls-117051300924\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-s-oil-boom-stalls-117051300924_1.html)

### **Fuel pump owners to observe 'No purchase' day on May 10, to work in single shifts from May 15**

Petrol pumps across Mumbai have planned to remain shut on Sundays and will work on single shifts between 9am to 6pm on weekdays starting from May 15 in a protest against large overhead costs and low commission. The petrol dealers have long been experiencing losses in business due to steep expenses and oil companies not providing a hike to their commission when promised to do so in January, reported DNA India. The report further stated that according to a member of Federation of All Maharashtra Petrol Dealers Association, the commission approved by the oil companies is based on the Apoorva Chandra committee report which stated 75 paise per litre for petrol and 50 paise per litre for diesel. It quoted a member saying that oil companies promised a hike in January, which was postponed to March and they still haven't received it. In fact, they have been asked to wait further. Similarly, in Bengaluru over 3,000 petrol stations will remain shut on Sundays with operational hours on weekdays limited between 9-6.

*Business Today - 10.05.2017*

<http://www.businesstoday.in/current/economy-politics/fuel-pump-owners-to-observe-no-purchase-day-on-may-10-to-work-in-single-shifts-from-may-15/story/251782.html>

### **India to import LPG from Iran to meet rising demand**

India has for the first time ever signed a contract to import LPG from Iran as it looks at additional sources of cooking fuel to meet rising domestic demand. State-owned oil firms will import one very large gas carrier (VLGC), or 44,000 tonnes,

from the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC) of the oil ministry showed on Friday. Sales of gasoline, or petrol, were 4.5 percent higher from a year earlier at 2.09 million tonnes. Cooking gas or liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) sales increased over 3 percent to 1.65 million tonne. Sales of bitumen, used for making roads, fell to 0.57 million tonnes. Fuel oil sales also edged lower in April.

*The Economic Times - 12.05.2017*

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/fuel-demand-in-april-up-3-per-cent-from-last-year/articleshow/58643665.cms>

### **'Easing crude prices good for India's inflation, GDP growth'**

Average crude oil prices will be around \$45 for the next half of this year and this, coupled with positive macro fundamentals, could translate into better growth numbers for the country. According to SBI Research's Ecowrap report, easing of crude oil prices will have a positive effect not only on inflation but also on GDP growth. "Past trends indicate that low oil prices lift global growth (and subsequently domestic growth) significantly," the report said. During 2003-2006, when average Brent crude was \$47 per barrel, the global GDP growth was 5 per cent (average) and India's average growth was at 8.6 per cent, it said. Since average crude oil prices are going to be around \$45 for the next half of 2017 or so, along with the positive macro fundamentals like projection of normal monsoon, lower CAD, continued spectre of low inflation accommodative monetary policy and fiscal discipline, a better growth number in 2017 and 2018 is expected. Prices of crude oil have plummeted more than 15 per cent in recent weeks to around \$48 per barrel.

*The Hindu Business Line - 12.05.2017*

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/easing-crude-prices-good-for-indias-inflation-gdp-growth/article9692796.ece>

### **India's record jet fuel exports set to fall as air travel soars**

India's record jet fuel exports may fall this year as an expanding middle class and cheaper air travel boost local consumption, refinery executives and analysts told Reuters, potentially raising ailing profit margins for the

per month for an initial six-month period, industry sources said. India imports almost a million tonnes of LPG every month to meet rising demand that has been further fuelled by the government drive to give free gas connections to poor women. LPG consumption in 2016-17 rose 9.8 per cent to 21.55 million tonnes. Of this, 11 million tonnes came from imports. India mainly imports LPG via term contracts from major Middle Eastern producers Saudi Aramco, Qatar's Tasweeq, Abu Dhabi National Oil Co and Kuwait Petroleum Corp. Sources said LPG imports will rise over the next three years to 16-17 million tonnes as the government pushes for making available cooking gas cylinders to the poor and wean them off polluting fuels. The country is looking to import LPG from Bangladesh. India had imported 8.8 million tonnes of LPG in 2015-16.

*The Hindustan Times - 10.05.2017*

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/business-news/india-to-import-lpg-from-iran-to-meet-rising-demand/story-tv05o3BxEaBaYSbnrPbZnI.html>

### **At least 5 crore BPL families to get LPG connections by March 2019: Pradhan**

Five crore BPL families across the country would be provided with LPG connections with a support of Rs 1600 per connection within March 2019, Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan announced on Saturday. Inaugurating the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) for BPL families of Assam in a function held in Dibrugarh, Pradhan also said about 90 per cent of the 37 lakh BPL families in Assam who do not have LPG connections as of now would also get it by March 2019. "The Assam government will also provide Rs 1,000 per PMUY connection to the beneficiaries, which will make LPG connection more affordable for the BPL families," Pradhan added. While the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in May 2016 in Ballia, Uttar Pradesh, the same was delayed in Assam "due to certain technical reasons," Pradhan said. Over 2.20 crore LPG connections have been already given in the first year of launch of this scheme, he said, pointing out this would also create about one lakh additional employment and provide business opportunity worth Rs 1000 crore for manufacture of cylinders, gas stoves, regulators, and gas hose.

*The Indian Express - 13.05.2017*

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/at-least-5-crore-bpl-families-to-get-lpg-connections-by-march-2019-dharmendra-pradhan-4654351/>

### **Anti-dumping duty slapped on 47 steel products**

fuel. Prime Minister Narendra Modi last month launched the first flight under the Regional Connectivity Scheme that is designed to spur air travel between smaller Indian cities that are currently under-served and to make flying more affordable. The government will cap fares under the scheme and offer airlines incentives to fly less traversed routes. The plan should eat into the country's jet fuel exports, which rose to a record of 741,000 tonnes in March, according to preliminary government data. The expected decline in exports could help raise jet fuel margins, which plunged to a nine-month low earlier this month, said three middle distillate traders. India's efforts to connect regional routes and the expansion of aircraft fleets will continue to boost local demand for jet fuel, said Sri Paravaikkarasu, head of East of Suez Oil at energy consultants FGE.

*The Financial Express - 09.05.2017*

<http://www.financialexpress.com/economy/indias-record-jet-fuel-exports-set-to-fall-as-air-travel-soars/660542/>

### **Steel policy to hit engineering exports**

Engineering exporters are miffed about the government's swadeshi drive in steel as they fear loss of competitiveness owing to the higher price of steel, a key input for them. Prices are already 15-20 per cent higher than the global prices, and the exporters apprehend a further rise. "With steel prices in India ruling 15-20 per cent higher than the global level, the preferential procurement of the basic raw material for the infrastructure and the government projects from domestic manufacturers would further push the cost, making it extremely difficult for the engineering exporters, particularly in the SME sector, to survive," the Engineering Export Promotion Council said. EEPC India chairman T.S. Bhasin said the new National Steel Policy aims at increasing the domestic supply and cut dependence on imports but is silent on the implications of the preferential treatment on prices and the user industries. The policy of preference to domestic steel players in procurement by the government and its agencies is applicable on all tenders that are yet to open their price bids.

*The Telegraph - 09.05.2017*

[https://www.telegraphindia.com/1170509/jsp/business/story\\_150546.jsp#.WRFM7GmGPcs](https://www.telegraphindia.com/1170509/jsp/business/story_150546.jsp#.WRFM7GmGPcs)

### **India to overtake Japan to become third-biggest solar market in 2017**

The Finance Ministry on Friday imposed anti-dumping duties on some steel products from Brazil, Russia, China, Korea, Japan and Indonesia. An official statement said that the duty will be effective for five years from August 8 last year. Foreign firms including Shagang International, Hyundai, POSCO, Toyota Tshusho Corporation, Nippon Steel & Sumikin Bussan, Sumitomo and Ohmi Industries have been named in the final anti-dumping order. They have been identified as companies that have been dumping their steel products into India. The new duty has been imposed on 47 products and ranges from \$478 per tonne to \$561 per tonne. BusinessLine had reported on May 7 that the rising global steel prices have made the anti-dumping duty redundant. The Directorate General of Anti-Dumping had recommended a base price of \$489 a tonne on HR coil imports from China; the prevailing provisional anti-dumping duty price was fixed at \$478 a tonne. Since then, steel prices in China jumped to \$500 a tonne last month due to sharp rise in coking coal prices.

*The Hindu Business Line - 13.05.2017*

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/india-imposes-new-duties-on-steel-products-risks-trade-complaints/article9694744.ece>

## **Leather exports continue to fall**

Leather exports are still on the downward trend, with data from the Council for Leather Exports (for 2016-17 until February) showing a negative growth of 4.12% for overall leather exports. In absolute numbers, the total exports during FY16 for the same period was at \$5396.7 million and for FY17, it fell to \$5174.12 million. Considering the fluctuation of the rupee, data shows a negative growth of 1.40%. "We can attribute the fall to the unstable European markets. However, the negative growth is not as steep as the trend in 2015-16, as the Europe-focused approach is changing. Increasing reliance on the US market is paying off and we will register a positive growth this fiscal," said Israr M Ahmed, regional chairman, south, Council for Leather Exports (CLE). Factory owners say that the negative growth has narrowed only compared to the previous year, and the business has not picked up compared to 2014. "Consumption has come down, the job market is down and demand has not picked up in the European market.

*The Times of India - 09.05.2017*

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/leather-exports-continue-to-fall/articleshow/58583081.cms>

## **UDAN: Airfares to be revised every three months**

India will become the third biggest solar market globally in 2017, says India Solar Handbook 2017 by Bridge to India, a consulting and knowledge service provider in the clean technology market. With 8.8 gw (giga watt) of projected capacity addition — a growth of 76 per cent over 2016 — India is set to become the third-largest photovoltaic market (PV) market in 2017, which will overtake Japan, the company said in a statement. As of March 2017, India has already installed 12.2 gw of utility scale solar power, it said. According to the report, about 79 gw of solar capacity is expected to be added globally in 2017, with Asian countries continuing to dominate and Europe falling by the wayside. It said India's solar capacity is expected to touch the 18.7 gw mark by the end of 2017, about 5 per cent of the global pie, growing 89 per cent over the last year. Total new solar capacity addition in the next 5 years is expected at 56 gw, it said.

*Business Standard - 08.05.2017*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-to-overtake-japan-to-become-third-biggest-solar-market-in-2017-117050800967\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-to-overtake-japan-to-become-third-biggest-solar-market-in-2017-117050800967_1.html)

## **Airlines offer massive discounts on shorter routes for June-August**

Indian flyers are in for a bonanza. After about a 15% rise in average airfares in the last couple of months, airlines are back with massive discounts for the lean travel months of June to August. Earlier in the day, IndiGo took the lead by offering fares as low as Rs 899. The fares are mostly for shorter sectors. For instance, an Agartala-Kolkata flight ticket can be bought for an all-inclusive fare of Rs 1,599. The ticket for an Ahmedabad-Mumbai flight is available for Rs 1,299 and a Bagdogra-Guwahati flight is for Rs 899, the lowest available flash fare. Rival SpiceJet soon followed with fares such as Rs 1,189 for Delhi-Jaipur and Rs 1,642 on Mumbai-Ahmedabad. Go Air introduced fares such as Rs 1,699 for Ahmedabad-Pune and Rs 1,950 for Delhi-Jammu. "The discounts have come after at least a couple of months and we have already seen an increase in our bookings," said Sharat Dhall, president of Yatra.com.

*The Economic Times - 09.05.2017*

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/industry/transportation/airlines/-aviation/airlines-offer-massive-discounts-on-shorter-routes-for-june-august/articleshow/58583704.cms>

Airfares as well as the government subsidy for airlines under the regional air connectivity scheme will be revised every three months depending on inflationary trends. The scheme -- UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik) -- provides for cap on air ticket prices and viability gap funding (VGF) for the participating carriers. The Civil Aviation Ministry has said caps on air ticket prices and VGF under the scheme would be revised on a quarterly basis. While airfares would be linked to inflation, VGF would be decided after taking into consideration inflation, cost of aviation turbine fuel and the rupee-dollar exchange rate. UDAN, that seeks to connect un-served and under-served airports as well as make flying more affordable, kicked off with the first flight taking off last month from Shimla to the national capital. "Both airfare and VGF caps will be revised on a quarterly basis." While the airfare cap will be indexed to inflation, the VGF caps as well as VGF amounts determined for specific routes will be indexed to ATF prices and exchange rate of INR vis-a- vis USD in addition to inflation," the Ministry said.

*The Economic Times - 10.04.2017*

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/industry/transportation/airlines/-aviation/udan-airfares-to-be-revised-every-three-months/articleshow/58614014.cms>

### **Draft Of Revised Rules For UDAN Likely In 2 Weeks**

The government is likely to complete in the next two weeks framing of the draft of revised rules for its scheme to promote low cost air travel and put up for stakeholder consultations, as it prepares for the second round of bidding by airlines. The Ministry of Civil Aviation undertook a comprehensive review of the rules, including those relating to the number of discounted seats in a plane and exclusive flying rights for carriers on select routes, under its regional connectivity scheme (RCS). "In another two weeks we will be putting out the RCS (rules) with amendments for public consultations," Ministry of Civil Aviation Secretary R N Choubey told PTI. Without elaborating on the specifics, the top official said the revision is being done with an emphasis on increasing competition. "Our intention is to decrease entry barriers and increase competition. We would like to bring as many players as possible. We want to create a level-playing field so that small players can bid aggressively," Mr Choubey added.

*NDTV - 15.05.2017*

### **Train tickets may get costlier as Railways rethinks service charge waiver**

Hit by mounting losses, state-run Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) and Indian Railways are pushing for a partial rollback of the service charges waiver given on train tickets earlier to boost digital transactions after the government's demonetisation move. According to sources, Indian Railways has already initiated talks with the finance ministry over this. On November 23 last year, the government had waived the service charge, while a free insurance scheme was also implemented on December 9. An annual waiver of service charge will lead to a loss of about Rs 500 crore on the revenue of IRCTC, while the company is likely to suffer an additional outgo of Rs 36-40 crore, if free insurance scheme is extended annually. The ministry of railways has written several letters to the finance ministry to compensate for these losses. On March 31, the Narendra Modi government had extended these digital sops till June 30. "We are now pushing even harder for compensation from finance ministry.

*Business Standard - 10.05.2017*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/train-tickets-may-get-costlier-as-railways-rethinks-service-charge-waiver-117051000307\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/train-tickets-may-get-costlier-as-railways-rethinks-service-charge-waiver-117051000307_1.html)

### **Cargo traffic at 12 major ports up 6 per cent to 56 MT in April**

Boosted by pick-up in demand, India's 12 major ports saw cargo traffic increase by 6.27 per cent to 55.75 million tonnes (MT) in April, the first month of the current fiscal. These top ports under the Centre had handled 52.46 MT cargo in April 2016. Increased demand from sectors like iron ore, coking coal and container traffic resulted in higher movement of cargo last month to 55.75 MT, as per the Indian Ports Association. Iron ore traffic volumes were up 40 per cent to 5.37 MT during the month as against 3.82 MT in April 2016 while coking coal volumes surged by 15 per cent to 4.61 MT. Container traffic was up 9.78 per cent to 7 lakh TEUs (twenty food equivalent units) while POL (petroleum, oil and lubricants) volumes too surged by 7 per cent. Kandla port handled the highest traffic volume at 9.32 MT during April this year followed by Paradip Port at 7.33 MT, JNPT Port at 5.75 MT, Mumbai at 5.33 MT and Visakhapatnam at 4.92 MT, the data revealed.

*The Economic Times - 10.05.2017*

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/industry/transportation/shipping/-transport/cargo-traffic-at-12-major-ports-up->

<http://www.ndtv.com/india-news/draft-of-revised-rules-for-udan-likely-in-2-weeks-1693458>

## **State govt to prepare logistics policy soon**

The Telangana government too is gung ho about the multi-billion dollar industry and is mulling a dedicated logistics policy. "Logistics has been identified as one of the priority sectors. In the first few years, we focused on IT, electronics manufacturing, biotechnology, defence and aerospace. Now that these sectors are doing well, we are focusing on the next set of sectors, which includes textiles, food processing, automotive as well as logistics. We will be preparing a policy for the sector. As of now, the regular incentives that we provide under the industrial policy are available for the sector but we would like to customize certain benefits for logistics players..." Telangana industries department principal secretary Jayesh Ranjan said. Ranjan added that after the government announced the setting up of dry ports in the state, it has been approached by leading international as well as domestic players that are keen on investing. On May 5 this year, the state government also inked a MoU with the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to set up a logistics park in the state.

*The Times of India - 10.05.2017*

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/state-govt-to-prepare-logistics-policy-soon/articleshow/58603835.cms>

[6-per-cent-to-56-mt-in-april/articleshow/58610959.cms](http://www.economictimes.com/news/industry/transportation/shipping/-/transport/gst-to-help-drive-new-age-warehouses-for-india-incs-ambitions/articleshow/58605148.cms)

## **GST to help drive new-age warehouses for India Inc's ambitions**

New-age warehousing and logistics in India would be midwived by the Goods and Services Tax (GST), which also aims to transform the South Asian nation into an integrated market for the first time since Independence. Small and often ill-equipped storage space in the country would now give way to neatly stacked, air conditioned warehouses, with higher levels of automation, as India ushers in the biggest tax reforms since 1947. And driving the change in India's supply chain landscape are the consumer goods companies, such as Hindustan Unilever, Glaxo Smithkline, and Johnson & Johnson. These companies are now putting out tenders for consolidating their supply chain operations into bigger warehouses. The new facilities will now cover about 450,000-500,000 square feet of space, almost five times the biggest warehouses in India right now. Logistics majors such as DHL, Allcargo and Mahindra Logistics are leasing bigger logistics spaces, while real estate developers such as Everstone Group's IndoSpace are investing billions in building bigger storage facilities.

*The Economic Times - 10.05.2017*

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/industry/transportation/shipping/-/transport/gst-to-help-drive-new-age-warehouses-for-india-incs-ambitions/articleshow/58605148.cms>