



June 18, 2024 – Tuesday

## Economy

### Government to engage industry leaders in key talks on draft digital competition bill

Industry stakeholders, including Big Tech, are set to voice their 'serious concerns' on the Draft Digital Competition Bill (DCB) at a MeitY convened meeting here on Tuesday. This meeting, which was earlier scheduled for June 13 but postponed at the last minute, is expected to be chaired by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) Secretary, sources said.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/government-to-engage-industry-leaders-in-key-talks-on-draft-digital-competition-bill/article68300871.ece>

### Fitch raises India's FY25 growth forecast but isn't that optimistic about global growth

Fitch Ratings on Tuesday raised India's growth forecast to 7.2 per cent for FY25. Meanwhile, it said that the global growth is expected to slow in 2025 despite monetary easing in 2024. "The global monetary policy cycle is entering a new phase, in which rates will be falling slowly but to levels that will still be restricting demand. We expect the ECB to cut rates twice more this year, and the Fed to start cutting rates in September with another cut in December. This is later than we had expected, reflecting stalled disinflation momentum in the first four months of the year. But US wage growth is gradually cooling," said in a report.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/fitch-raises-indias-fy25-growth-forecast-but-isnt-that-optimistic-about-global-growth/articleshow/111072588.cms>

## Finance

### PSBs outshine private, foreign peers in technical efficiency: SBI report

Public sector banks (PSBs) performed better than private and foreign peers during the FY06-FY23 period in terms of efficiency, according to a report by State Bank of India (SBI). According to the report, the average technical efficiency of the banking industry (overall) during the period stood at 81.21 per cent. This means, the lenders could have reduced their inputs by 18.79 per cent for producing the same level of output.

[https://www.business-standard.com/finance/news/psbs-outshine-private-foreign-banks-in-efficiency-during-fy0623-sbi-124061700542\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/finance/news/psbs-outshine-private-foreign-banks-in-efficiency-during-fy0623-sbi-124061700542_1.html)

### Advance tax numbers bring cheer to the economy

The government's advance tax collection in this financial year till June 15 surged 27.6% year-on-year to ₹1.48 lakh crore, signalling a robust economy and strong corporate performance, said people privy to the information. The amount included ₹1.14 lakh crore as corporate tax and ₹34,362 crore as personal income tax, they said. The advance tax collection between April 1 and June 15 last year was ₹1.16 lakh crore, comprising ₹92,172 crore as corporate tax and ₹23,513 crore as personal income tax. The numbers reflect the advance tax collection till 11 pm on June 15, the people said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/finance/advance-tax-numbers-bring-cheer-to-the-economy/articleshow/111066784.cms>

### **Subsidy allocation likely to stay at Interim Budget mark of Rs 4.1 lakh crore**

The government is likely to stick to the ₹ 4.1 lakh crore subsidies allocation for 2024-25 announced in the interim budget in February, according to people with knowledge of the matter. The allocation was 7% lower than the revised estimate of ₹4.41 lakh crore for 2023-24. "We do not see any change in the estimate of our subsidy bills than what we had pegged in February," a senior official told ET on condition of anonymity, adding that the allocation was done after considering the pertinent domestic and global factors.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/subsidy-allocation-likely-to-stay-at-interim-budget-mark-of-rs-4-1-lakh-crore/articleshow/111066570.cms>

## **Industry**

### **Indian Inc faces Q1 revenue uncertainties due to slow govt spending: Icra**

Corporates are bracing for revenue uncertainties in the April-June period due to a slowdown in government spending and the onset of the annual monsoon season, domestic rating agency ICRA said on Monday. The sequential revenue growth will taper in the first quarter of the fiscal, the agency said in a note, adding that there was a 6.5 per cent growth in revenues in the March quarter compared to the preceding December quarter.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/indian-inc-faces-q1-revenue-uncertainties-due-to-slow-govt-spending-icra-124061700775\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/indian-inc-faces-q1-revenue-uncertainties-due-to-slow-govt-spending-icra-124061700775_1.html)

### **FMCG companies increase prices to maintain margins due to high input costs**

Over the past 2-3 months, monthly household shopping bills have risen due to price hikes ranging from 2 to 17 per cent on certain foods and personal care brands products and categories by fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) companies, according to a report by BusinessLine. Companies have raised prices by 2 per cent to 9 per cent on soaps and body washes, 8 to 11 per cent on hair oils, and 3 to 17 per cent on select food items, the report said.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/fmcg-companies-increase-prices-to-maintain-margins-due-to-high-input-costs-124061700504\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/fmcg-companies-increase-prices-to-maintain-margins-due-to-high-input-costs-124061700504_1.html)

### **Wearables device segment sees slower growth in March quarter but players remain bullish on outlook**

The wearable device segment witnessed sluggish growth trends in the March quarter but players said they continue to have a bullish outlook. As per estimates released by IDC, India's smart wearable device market grew by merely 2.1 per cent in March quarter (Q1 2024) year-over-year (y-o-y) to 25.6 million units after growing by double digits consecutively since Q4 2017.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/companies/wearables-device-segment-sees-slower-growth-in-march-quarter-but-players-remain-bullish-on-outlook/article68300850.ece>

### **Demand revival may keep rally going for ball bearing industry majors**

The ball bearing industry is a key part of the supply chain for multiple industries because ball bearings are used to reduce friction in many moving parts. As such, demand revival for ball bearings is a signal that downstream industries are witnessing increased demand. Most of the listed stocks in the industry have seen 10-15 per cent rise in the last week. The domestic market has seen demand improving from the industrial segment, automobiles and railways. While exports remain muted for the European Union and the UK, there is better demand in other regions. There are new opportunities opening up due to capex by industrial metals, cement and steel industry as well as the electric vehicle (EV) industry.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/demand-revival-likely-to-keep-rally-going-for-ball-bearing-majors-124061700729\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/demand-revival-likely-to-keep-rally-going-for-ball-bearing-majors-124061700729_1.html)

## **Agriculture**

### **PM Modi to release Rs 20,000 crore of PM-Kisan Samman fund into 9.26 crore bank accounts of farmers on Tuesday**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will on Tuesday release the 17th instalment of the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme, amounting to over Rs 20,000 crores, will be distributed to approximately 9.26 crore beneficiary farmers through Direct Benefit Transfer in Uttar Pradesh. Since its inception, the PM-KISAN scheme has

disbursed over Rs 3.04 lakh crore to more than 11 crore eligible farmer families, underscoring its substantial impact and wide-reaching benefits. According to a press release, PM Modi is poised to launch several significant initiatives during his upcoming visit to Uttar Pradesh and Bihar on June 18- 19.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/agriculture/pm-modi-to-release-rs-20000-crore-of-pm-kisan-samman-fund-into-9-26-crore-bank-accounts-of-farmers-on-tuesday/articleshow/111055391.cms>

#### **Onion buffer stock not even 10% of FY25 target**

The government's procurement of onions from farmers for creation of a buffer stock for price stabilisation operations has not touched even 10% of the 5 lakh tonnes it has targeted for 2024-25, officials said. June marks the end of the peak arrival period for rabi season onions, after which they go into the storages of traders, stockists and farmers.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/agriculture/onion-buffer-stock-not-even-10-of-fy25-target/articleshow/111066629.cms>

#### **Govt's 100 days programme may include launch of Edible Oil Mission**

The Union government's 100 days programme, likely to be announced soon, may include launching the much-awaited National Mission on Oilseeds under which the Agriculture Ministry targets to raise domestic oilseeds production by additional 2-3 million tonnes (mt) by 2025-26 from current about 40-41 mt and to further lower India's import dependency on edible oils.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/govts-100-days-programme-may-include-launch-of-edible-oil-mission/article68300152.ece>

### **Infrastructure**

#### **NHAI to begin work on Rs 4,000-crore Chattergala tunnel in J-K at earliest: Nitin Gadkari**

The NHAI will begin work on the Rs 4,000-crore Chattergala tunnel in Jammu and Kashmir at the earliest, Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari said on Monday. Gadkari on Monday chaired a review meeting that was also attended by Union Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) Jitendra Singh. "The prestigious Chattergala tunnel work, costing about Rs 4,000 crore, will be executed by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) and the underpasses on the Kathua express corridor section, wherever demanded by the public, will be undertaken at the earliest," an official spokesperson said after the review meeting.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/infrastructure/nhai-to-begin-work-on-rs-4000-crore-chattergala-tunnel-in-j-k-at-earliest-nitin-gadkari/articleshow/111064784.cms>

### **Energy**

#### **Centre introduces rules for offshore minerals ahead of the auctions**

In a bid to kick-start the nation's offshore mineral auctions, the Centre has introduced the Offshore Areas (Existence of Mineral Resources) Rules, 2024. This comprehensive regulatory framework mandates rigorous exploration standards to ensure accurate assessment and sustainable development of offshore mineral resources. According to the new rules dated June 6, a minimum of general exploration (G2) is required to grant mining leases, while general exploration (G4) is necessary for obtaining composite licences. These standards are designed to provide a clear and structured approach to evaluating the presence and potential of mineral resources before advancing for extraction.

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/centre-introduces-offshore-mineral-rules-ahead-of-auction-launch-124061700717\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/centre-introduces-offshore-mineral-rules-ahead-of-auction-launch-124061700717_1.html)

#### **India likely to add 30-35 GW renewable capacity in FY25**

India will likely add 30-35 GW of renewable energy capacity in the ongoing financial year, higher than last fiscal's addition of 18.4 GW, two senior government officials told ET. Renewable energy sources contributed 71% to the 26 GW of power generation capacity that India added in FY24, according to the Council on Energy, Environment and Water.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/renewables/india-likely-to-add-30-35-gw-renewable-capacity-in-fy25/articleshow/111066670.cms>

### **Extreme heat conditions melt diesel demand, sales drop 4% in June**

India's diesel demand slumped in June as extreme heat conditions in parts of the country curtailed travel, preliminary data of state-owned firms showed on Monday. Fuel sales, which traditionally surge during elections, have defied the trend this year, falling month after month. And the decline has now extended even after the end of the general elections.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/extreme-heat-conditions-melt-diesel-demand-sales-drop-4-in-june-124061700242\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/extreme-heat-conditions-melt-diesel-demand-sales-drop-4-in-june-124061700242_1.html)

### **Production of Bitumen using biomass**

India is looking to start large-scale production of bio-bitumen from biomass or agricultural waste, a move that would help reduce imports of the material used for asphaltting of roads while also addressing the persistent issue of stubble burning. India currently imports about half of its annual requirement of bitumen and the target is to replace imports with bio-bitumen over the next 10 years, a senior government official told ET. "Based on the success of the pilot study, we hope to kick-start production of bio-bitumen on a large scale by the end of 2025," the official added.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/on-the-way-production-of-bitumen-using-biomass/articleshow/111066709.cms>

### **DERC releases draft regulation for green power obligations on discoms**

The DERC has released its draft regulations for renewable purchase obligation (RPO), mandating a 29.91 per cent green energy purchase this year for all stakeholders, including discoms, officials said on Monday. RPOs mandate all electricity distribution licensees to purchase energy from renewable sources. The Draft Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission (Renewable Purchase Obligation and Renewable Energy Certificate Framework Implementation) Regulations, 2024 has been issued by the DERC, which is seeking public comments till July 2, they said. Under the draft regulations released by the Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission (DERC), all stakeholders including discoms, must comply with specified RPO targets as a percentage of their total annual consumption.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/power/derc-releases-draft-regulation-for-green-power-obligations-on-discoms/articleshow/111065788.cms>

## **Telecom**

### **DoT calls for R&D proposals: 5G intelligent villages, quantum cryptography**

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) on Monday announced two proposals—5G Intelligent Village and Quantum Encryption Algorithm (QEA)—aimed at catalysing innovation and technological advancement in the telecom sector. Both proposals shall be funded under the Telecom Technology Development Fund (TTDF) scheme of the DoT.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/dot-calls-for-rd-proposals-5g-intelligent-villages-quantum-cryptography-124061700916\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/dot-calls-for-rd-proposals-5g-intelligent-villages-quantum-cryptography-124061700916_1.html)

## **Healthcare**

### **Approval timelines for clinical trial applications back to pre-Covid days**

Industry insiders feel that approval timelines for clinical trials in India have slipped back to the pre-pandemic days. During the pandemic, trial approval timelines had significantly improved by 30-40 per cent, claim industry insiders. Speaking to Business Standard, Sanjay Vyas, Global SBU Head-Clinical Logistics and Global Safety Services, and Managing Director-India at Parexel, one of the largest clinical research organizations (CROs) in the world, says that in the last 12 months, around 110 clinical trial applications have been approved by the Indian regulator. Parexel is working on 30 clinical trials in India at the moment out of the 600-odd trials it is conducting worldwide. This is despite the fact that the CRO employs more than 6,000 people in India, or about 20 per cent of its global workforce.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/clinical-trial-application-approval-timelines-revert-to-precovid-levels-124061700789\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/clinical-trial-application-approval-timelines-revert-to-precovid-levels-124061700789_1.html)

### **NPPA fixes retail prices for 54 drug formulations and 8 special products**

The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has announced the fixing of retail prices of 54 drug formulations and eight special feature products. The decision to revise the prices of the formulations was taken during the authority's 124th meeting. Prices have been fixed for drugs and formulations meant for diabetes, hypertension, heart issues, multivitamins, bacterial infections, and allergies, according to a notification from the Department of Pharmaceuticals and the NPPA.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/nppa-fixes-retail-prices-for-54-drug-formulations-and-8-special-products-124061700826\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/nppa-fixes-retail-prices-for-54-drug-formulations-and-8-special-products-124061700826_1.html)

## External

### Centre developing mechanism to validate refund claimed under RoDTEP

The government is developing a 'verification mechanism' to validate the refund claimed by exporters under Remission of Duties and Taxes on Export Products (RoDTEP). This will ensure that countries don't retaliate against the scheme claiming that the reimbursements paid are subsidies. The scheme came into effect over three years ago to refund the embedded non-creditable central, state and local levies paid on inputs to exporters to boost India's exports.

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/govt-develops-verification-mechanism-for-exporters-rodtep-refund-claims-124061700675\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/govt-develops-verification-mechanism-for-exporters-rodtep-refund-claims-124061700675_1.html)

### India has option to hit back at EU tariffs with retaliatory custom duties

India has the option to propose the imposition of retaliatory customs duties under the WTO norms on goods imported of a certain value from the EU, as the two sides have failed to reach a consensus on the European Union's safeguard measures on some steel products, an official has said. The EU has extended safeguard duties on certain steel imports, scheduled to expire this month, by another two years till 2026.

[https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/india-has-option-to-hit-back-at-eu-tariffs-with-retaliatory-custom-duties-124061700657\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/india-has-option-to-hit-back-at-eu-tariffs-with-retaliatory-custom-duties-124061700657_1.html)

### Gold, silver import from UAE surges 210%, need duty revision in FTA: GTRI

India's gold and silver imports from its free trade agreement (FTA) partner UAE have skyrocketed 210 per cent to \$10.7 billion in 2023-24 and there is a need to potentially revise the concessional customs duty rates under the pact to mitigate the arbitrage driving this surge, a report said on Monday. Economic think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said this sharp rise in gold and silver imports is primarily driven by import duty concessions granted by India to the UAE under the India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA).

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/gold-silver-import-from-uae-surges-210-need-duty-revision-in-fta-gtri-124061700188\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/gold-silver-import-from-uae-surges-210-need-duty-revision-in-fta-gtri-124061700188_1.html)

### India, US agree to step up cooperation on semiconductors, critical minerals

India and the US have agreed to closer engagement and cooperation on supply chain, semiconductors and critical minerals during the meeting of the India-US initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET), led by Indian National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and his US counterpart Jake Sullivan in New Delhi. India and the US Monday launched a new strategic semiconductors partnership to co-develop semiconductor design and manufacturing processes for precision-guided ammunition. "Launching a new strategic semiconductor partnership between General Atomics and 3rdiTech to co-develop semiconductor design and manufacturing for precision-guided ammunition and other national security-focused electronics platforms," read the fact sheet issued by the US and India.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/india-us-agree-to-step-up-cooperation-on-semiconductors-critical-minerals/articleshow/111071203.cms>