

(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.)

Fitch Cuts India's Growth Outlook to 6.6% for FY20

Global rating agency Fitch Ratings on Monday cut India's gross domestic product (GDP) growth forecast for FY20 to 6.6% from 6.8% earlier as manufacturing and agriculture sectors showed signs of slowing down over the past year. "We see growth for FY20 printing at 6.6%, before stepping up to 7.1% in FY21 and 7% in FY22," Fitch said in its Global Economic Outlook. In March, the ratings agency had lowered the growth forecast to 6.8% from its previous estimate of 7% on weaker than expected momentum in the economy. However, it retained the FY21 estimate at 7.1%. India's economy grew at a five-year low of 6.8% in 2018-19. Citing the declines in India's GDP growth for the fourth consecutive quarter in January-March, with the economy expanding by 5.8%, Fitch said: "This is the lowest growth outturn in five years. The slowdown over the past year has been driven by steadily cooling activity in the manufacturing sector and, to a lesser extent, agriculture". It added that weaker momentum has been mainly domestically driven, though export growth has also faltered more recently. The agency expects another 25 basis points rate cut later in 2019, which will push the policy repo rate down to 5.50%. One basis point is one-hundredth of a percentage point.

The Economic Times - 18.06.2019

<https://epaper.timesgroup.com/Olive/ODN/TheEconomicTimes/shared/ShowArticle.aspx?doc=ETKM%2F2019%2F06%2F18&entity=Ar01317&sk=76BA0DE2&mode=text>

PM Narendra Modi meets key secretaries to finalise 100-day agenda

Ahead of the maiden budget of his second term in office, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Tuesday brainstormed with top bureaucrats of finance and other ministries to finalise the government's 100-day agenda with a focus to revive the sagging economy and create jobs. Sources said the meeting at the Prime Minister's residence had in attendance all five secretaries in the finance ministry and other key ministries as well as top officials of the Niti Aayog. The high-level meeting is also expected to clear a five-year vision for the government with view to achieve USD 5-trillion

India's GDP to slow down to 6.8 per cent in FY2020: DBS

DBS Bank has revised India's GDP growth for fiscal year 2020 downwards to 6.8 per cent year-on-year (YoY) from 7 per cent projected earlier, citing headwinds for exports amidst challenging trade outlook. "Growth headwinds swiftly turn attention to the likely policy response. We expect monetary policy to do much of the heavy lifting, given limited fiscal leeway," the bank in its report on the Indian economy on Thursday. "The Reserve Bank of India's policy stance was changed from neutral to accommodative, opening the door to further easing," wrote Radhika Rao, Economist at DBS Group Research, pointing out the 75 bps repo rate cut so far this year. "We revise down our real GDP forecast for FY20 to 6.8 per cent YoY versus 7 per cent earlier," the bank said. A negative output gap will keep demand-side inflationary risks in check, with core inflation catching down with headline consumer price inflation (core at 4.2 per cent in May versus 6 per cent average in October-December 2018). We expect inflation to remain sub-target this year (3.8 per cent YoY versus 3.4 per cent in FY19)... In the face of slowing growth and sub-target inflation, the need to hanker over a wide real rate buffer has reduced, said Rao.

The Hindu Business Line - 21.06.2019

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/indias-gdp-to-slow-down-to-68-per-cent-in-fy2020-dbs/article28083137.ece>

Firm on reforms to boost growth: PM

The government has made clear its intention to undertake reform measures to boost growth and highlighted the need to make the Indian economy competitive, Prime Minister Narendra Modi told a group of economists and sectoral experts on Saturday at a meeting ahead of the presentation of the Union Budget. The sectoral experts at the meeting held at Niti Aayog were drawn from areas such as labour and employment, farm sector, health and education. The PM is understood to have indicated that not all steps can be unveiled in the Budget slated for July 5 but that the

economy goal in the shortest possible time-frame. It is believed that future course of many of the prime minister's pet projects like doubling farmers' income, PM-KISAN, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, piped water for all, electricity for all and others was discussed. With the farm sector facing headwinds, Modi last week stressed upon the need for structural reforms in agriculture which would boost private investment, strengthen logistics and provide ample market support to farmers. The prime minister is likely to have discussed the road map for reforms for every department with a view to making it easier to do business in the country and boost the economy.

The Economic Times - 18.06.2019

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/narendra-modi-meets-key-secretaries-in-run-up-to-budget/articleshow/69844485.cms?from=mdr>

Mfg outlook in Q1 worst in NDA years: Survey

Manufacturing outlook for the current quarter plummeted at its fastest pace in recent years, with those looking to raise production at its lowest level since UPA days, a survey conducted by industry chamber Ficci has shown. Around 41% of the respondents in the survey covering over 300 manufacturing units, with a combined annual turnover of over 3.5 lakh crore, expect higher production during the June quarter — a 13 percentage point drop since the March-quarter. During the first quarter of the current financial year, 36% of the respondents are expecting higher number of orders, against 44% in the fourth quarter of the last financial year, the survey released on Sunday showed. Of the 12 sectors covered by the survey, auto, metals, medical devices and leather and footwear were seen to be most pessimistic and pointed to low growth expectations. In contrast, electronics and electricals were bullish on growth, while textiles, chemicals, fertilizer and pharma, capital goods, paper, textiles machinery, cement and ceramics expected moderate growth. In one of the few positive signs, the survey indicated, interest rates have begun to come down. "Average interest rate paid by the manufacturers has slightly decreased to 9.9% a year as against 10.3% during the last quarter, but the highest rate remains as high as 14%.

The Economic Times - 24.06.2019

<https://epaper.timesgroup.com/Olive/ODN/TimesOfIndia/shared/ShowArticle.aspx?doc=TOIKM%2F2019%2F06%2F24&entity=Ar01104&sk=F9D09308&mode=text>

government will continuously address concerns over growth and jobs even as he noted that the country is ready for change. "Lively, vibrant, constructive and extremely positive discussions with economists and experts on 'economic policy: the road ahead' under the chairmanship of Prime Minister," Niti Aayog tweeted. Attendees were divided into five groups to suggest breakthrough ideas on employment, agricultural and water resources, exports, education, and health. Presentations were then made to the Prime Minister on the five topics. "Several ideas were put on the table to boost growth and measures to provide an impetus to employment," said a source.

The Times of India - 23.06.2019

<https://epaper.timesgroup.com/Olive/ODN/TimesOfIndia/shared/ShowArticle.aspx?doc=TOIKM%2F2019%2F06%2F23&entity=Ar00306&sk=B49E5166&mode=text>

'Public Sector Cos' Borrowing Impact on Inflation Overblown

Reserve Bank of India governor Shaktikanta Das has received support from Bank of America Merrill Lynch (BofAML) on his view that fiscal risks from raising extra-budgetary resources are mostly overdone and that the borrowings of state-run enterprises should not be included into that of the sovereign. The six-member RBI Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) was divided in its view of fiscal slippage and its impact on inflation trajectory. While the inflation trajectory has been within the central bank's comfort level, prompting every MPC member to vote unanimously for a 25-basis point policy rate cut in June, any disruption on prices may change the way MPC members see the possibility of further rate reductions. Minutes of the June MPC meeting showed that two members, including deputy governor Viral Acharya, flagged off concerns over upside risk, which was downplayed by the Governor. "Government securities are typically funded by bank liquidity, whereas PSU bonds are financed by a leverage on bank deposits. This does not impact either banks' deposits, asset books or money market liquidity," BofAML said in a note, in support to Governor Das. The firm explained that when a bank bids in a g-sec auction, it has to carve the investment out of its loan or investment book.

The Economic Times - 22.06.2019

<https://epaper.timesgroup.com/Olive/ODN/TheEconomicTimes/shared/ShowArticle.aspx?doc=ETKM%2F2019%2F06%2F22&entity=Ar00607&sk=8FF1E811&mode=text>

Govt rules out bringing oil products under GST for now

The Centre has virtually ruled out including petroleum products within the ambit of GST immediately, turning down repeated demands from the aviation sector and oil companies. Even the petroleum ministry had taken up cudgels for the sector that has been arguing that benefit of GST is not accruing to them as companies cannot claim input tax credit. The credit can only be claimed if the entire chain from inputs to the final product pays GST. The Centre is, however, of the view that the change in the regime may not pass muster with the states, which want to retain flexibility in taxing a few items that they have control over. Stamp duty on real estate, excise on alcohol and petroleum products are among the handful of items on which states still have control after the introduction of GST. At the time of the introduction of GST two years ago, the states and the Centre had decided to pool their powers, which now vests with the GST Council. The panel headed by the Union finance minister now decides the rates and the indirect tax regime, leaving only a few items with the state FM. In any case, the overall levy is not going to reduce significantly as the government will impose cess above the 28% rate on petrol and diesel to ensure that there is no loss to the exchequer.

The Economic Times - 18.06.2019

<https://epaper.timesgroup.com/Olive/ODN/TimesOfIndia/shared/ShowArticle.aspx?doc=TOIKM%2F2019%2F06%2F18&entity=Ar01501&sk=1151417F&mode=text>

Economics can support another 30,000 petrol pumps, says CRISIL report

The petroleum ministry's efforts to further expand the country's retail fuel network may eat into its own existing market, instead of catering to a new one, a report by rating agency CRISIL has suggested. The planned expansion would be feasible if stopped at less than half its target, it said. In November 2018, the government allowed the three oil marketing companies (OMCs) — Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation (HPCL) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation (BPCL) — to add 78,493 pumps combined to their existing retail network. "The economics do not support the addition of 78,000 petrol pumps. There is room for only less than half, that is 30,000 petrol pumps, if the pumps are to maintain current throughput levels," CRISIL said in its note. At present, India has 64,624 fuel retail outlets. CRISIL pegged the current throughput of these outlets at 160 kilo litres a month (KLPM), which is less than half of what it is for a developed country like the US. "If all the proposed pumps are commissioned, the

You may soon be able to buy petrol, diesel from supermarket

The government is likely to soon permit supermarkets to retail petrol and diesel in its bid to ease fuel access to end consumers. The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas in this regard may come up with a Cabinet note to relax existing norms, the Business Standard reported, citing sources. The government is expected to ready the note within the first 100 days of it coming to power. As it was sworn in on May 30 that means the note might be finalised in the first week of September. It is likely to suggest bringing down the minimum requirement for companies trying to get into the retail fuel segment. This means that the government could lower the basic infrastructure investment of about Rs 2,000 crore in the domestic market, or providing bank guarantees for 3 million tonnes (30 lakh tonnes) or equivalent amount, the report said. If the government goes ahead with the changes, it could open the gates for multi-brand retail majors such as Future Group and Reliance Retail as well as global majors of the likes of Saudi Aramco to enter the lucrative Indian fuel retail space.

Business Today - 19.06.2019

<https://www.businesstoday.in/current/policy/petrol-diesel-government-to-allow-supermarkets-sell-fuel-ministry-of-petroleum-and-natural-gas-cabinet-note/story/357192.html>

HPCL relents, govt recognises ONGC as company promoter

Hindustan Petroleum Corp Ltd has for the last 15 months refused to recognise its majority shareholder ONGC as its promoter but the government has now for all practical purposes started giving the company its due recognition. Government head-hunter Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB) on June 17 called ONGC Chairman and Managing Director Shashi Shanker to assist in selecting the new Director of HPCL, a move seen as a stamp of approval for ONGC being the parent of HPCL, sources in know of the development said. Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC) in January last year bought the government's entire 51.11 per cent stake in HPCL for Rs 36,915 crore. HPCL thereafter became its subsidiary but HPCL management has continuously refused to recognise ONGC as its promoter. In regulatory filings for five consecutive quarters, HPCL listed "President of India" as its promoter with "zero" per cent shareholding. ONGC was listed as "public

throughput of dealers will be significantly affected and operating the pumps, for all intent and purposes, will become unviable," the CRISIL report added.

Business Standard - 19.06.2019

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/economics-can-support-another-30-000-petrol-pumps-says-crisil-report-119061701345_1.html

Iran oil minister says oil market is 'fragile and unstable'

The global oil market is "unstable and fragile", Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Zanganeh told Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak in a meeting in Tehran, Iran state broadcaster IRIB said on Monday. "We discussed the global oil markets and I said the market is highly manipulated by political agendas," Zanganeh was quoted as saying by IRIB.

The Economic Times - 18.06.2019

<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/iran-oil-minister-says-oil-market-is-fragile-and-unstable/69837127>

India flags rising crude oil prices to Saudi Arabia

India has flagged the rising crude oil prices to Saudi Arabia and sought keeping it at reasonable levels. Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas and Steel, Dharmendra Pradhan had a telephonic conversation with Khalid Al-Falih, Minister of Energy, Industry & Mineral Resources, Saudi Arabia for the same. "Pradhan, referring to the developments in the Strait of Hormuz, conveyed his concern on rising crude oil prices. He also reiterated the sensitivity of Indian consumers to prevailing crude oil price volatility," an official statement said. Pradhan has sought active role of Saudi Arabia within OPEC and in the OPEC Plus discussions for keeping oil prices at a reasonable

shareholder", owning "77.88 crores" shares or "51.11 per cent" shareholding of the company.

The Economic Times - 24.06.2019

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/hpcl-relents-govt-recognises-ongc-as-company-promoter/articleshow/69912294.cms>

UAE assures supply of oil, LPG to India despite tanker attacks: Pradhan

Oil cartel OPEC member UAE has assured India of uninterrupted supply of oil and LPG despite disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz, Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said Monday. India is 83 per cent dependent on imports to meet its oil needs and is reliant on nations like the UAE to meet half of its cooking gas (LPG) needs. Pradhan in Twitter posts said he held telephonic discussions with UAE Minister and Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) Group CEO Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber over tensions in the Gulf region following attacks on two oil tankers last week. "Expressed concern at the supply disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz. Dr. Jaber assured me of oil and LPG supplies to India despite the disruptions," he tweeted. The attacks on oil tankers last week raised concerns over supplies through the Strait of Hormuz that is the conduit for a fifth of the world's oil. "Spoke to UAE Minister of State and Group CEO @AdnocGroup H.E. Dr. Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber and discussed ways to collaborate and work together to strengthen our hydrocarbon engagement," Pradhan said.

The Economic Times - 18.06.2019

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/india-says-uae-assures-supply-of-oil-lpg-despite-tanker-attacks/articleshow/69827463.cms>

Pradhan steps up energy diplomacy amid oil price volatility

Oil minister Dharmendra Pradhan has stepped up the country's energy diplomacy initiatives amid oil price volatility and ongoing geo-political tensions in the Middle East. After being reinstated as the Union cabinet minister for petroleum and natural gas, he has talked to a host of senior foreign ministers and industry leaders in the oil and gas space including US energy secretary Rick Perry, Russian Deputy PM Yury P Trutnev, UAE Minister of State and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber, Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries' Director General Mohammed Barkindo and

level, the statement added. The Ministers also discussed about Saudi interests in India's energy sector to further bolster bilateral ties. Pradhan also reviewed the progress of Saudi investments in India's refining & petrochemical sectors. They agreed to expedite the implementation of various initiatives to transform the hydrocarbon engagement from a buyer-seller one into a comprehensive one, the statement said.

The Hindu Business Line - 23.06.2019

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/india-flags-rising-crude-oil-prices-to-saudi-arabia/article28107362.ece>

Russian Deputy PM discusses energy cooperation with Petroleum Minister Pradhan

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Yury Petrovich Trutnev held a formal meeting with Union Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan here on Wednesday and discussed issues related to energy cooperation between the two countries. "We were discussing the issues of energy cooperation. We agreed to continue the discussion with relevant companies in the energy field in India and from Russia," Trutnev said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during his two-day visit to Bishkek last week to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit, held a bilateral meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin and also accepted the latter's invitation to be the Chief Guest at the Eastern Economic Forum, scheduled to be held in Vladivostok in early September. In the meeting, the two leaders reportedly decided to further widen the scope of their economic partnership in the sectors of energy, Arctic region, transfer of technology, joint projects under 'Make in India' initiative and manpower.

The Economic Times - 20.06.2019

<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/russian-deputy-pm-discusses-energy-cooperation-with-petroleum-minister-pradhan/69867965>

SIAM pushes for enhanced alternative fuels penetration amid focus on electric vehicles

Automobile industry body SIAM has proposed making petrol-powered two-wheelers and passenger vehicles material compatible with 10 per cent ethanol (E10) and 3 per cent methanol (M3) blends by 2025. In a white paper on 'Alternative Fuels for Vehicles' released recently, the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) also said that by 2030, the auto industry

International Energy Agency's chief Fatih Birol. Since 2018, India has been hard pressed in dealing with ever-increasing crude oil price volatility and crude oil supply disruptions on the back of US-imposed economic sanctions on Iran and Venezuela. The surge in crude oil prices last year led to domestic prices of petrol and diesel sky-rocketing across the country, to its highest level ever.

The Economic Times - 22.06.2019

<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/pradhan-steps-on-energy-diplomacy-amid-oil-price-volatility/69893223>

Auto, factory slowdown to hit oil companies' earnings growth

Consumption growth of petroleum products — a proxy for India's industrial activity — was under 1.5 per cent for the third consecutive month in May, reflecting a precipitate decline in auto sales volumes, drop in housing starts, and slower GDP growth. Sales of both auto and industrial fuels rose 0.04 per cent in May to 18.61 million tons, data compiled from Petroleum and Planning and Analysis Cell showed. On a trailing 12-month basis, petroleum product consumption grew 2.11 per cent in May, the slowest in 18 months. GDP growth in the March quarter moderated to 5.8 per cent, the slowest pace of expansion in about four years. Similarly, car sales volume growth dropped to the lowest in seven years. The combined inventory value of cars and two-wheelers is about \$8 billion. Among retail fuels, diesel consumption rose 3.59 per cent on the trailing 12-month average — half the growth rate in last fiscal. Diesel accounts for 42 per cent of the total petroleum products consumption, with transport demand making up two-thirds of consumption. Among engine fuels, ATF has witnessed the highest contraction, reflecting the impact of aircraft grounding by Jet Airways.

The Economic Times - 20.06.2019

<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/auto-factory-slowdown-to-hit-oil-companies-earnings-growth/69872165>

Oil in floating storage hit near two-year high in May

Crude and condensate in long-term floating storage hit its highest since August 2017 in May at 24 million barrels, as U.S. sanctions against Venezuela and Iran hindered the ability of the OPEC members to export, data from analytics firm Vortexa showed. Floating storage rose 15 million barrels in May compared with average levels of May 2018, and levels this month have already reached 26 million barrels, the data

could make specific vehicles compatible with 20 per cent ethanol (E20)-blended gasoline depending upon sustained availability of fuels with separately labelled dispensing at fuel stations. While electrification of fleet will be a major help towards providing energy security and improving environment, SIAM said that "India needs to work on other efforts, to not only complement this effort, considering the ultimate objective of improving India's energy security". With a requisite policy push and infrastructure development, to be done as an enabler of fuel diversification effort by the government, the automotive industry aims to achieve substantial penetrations of alternative fuel vehicles, it added.

The Economic Times - 19.06.2019

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/uto/auto-news/siam-pushes-for-enhanced-alternative-fuels-penetration-amid-focus-on-electric-vehicles/articleshow/69845085.cms>

Iran, Venezuela to complicate global oil deal talks: Kazakh energy minister

Talks between OPEC and its allies next month over whether to extend their global oil output cut deal will be complicated by uncertainties over Iran and Venezuela's stance, Kazakh Energy Minister Kanat Bozumbayev said. The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and other large oil producers, including Russia and Kazakhstan, will meet in Vienna on July 1-2 to discuss whether the oil output deal, which expires after June 30, should be continued. "I think it won't be easy," Bozumbayev told reporters about the forthcoming talks, in comments cleared for publication on Monday. "(There are) different positions. Some countries, like Iran, Venezuela (there are) sanctions. Will they want to or not, it's hard (to say)," he said.

The Economic Times - 24.06.2019

<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/iran-venezuela-to-complicate-global-oil-deal-talks-kazakh-energy-minister/69924092s>

showed on Friday. "The rise in long-term storage appears to be driven by the impact of sanctions on Iran and Venezuela, trapping more heavy barrels in offshore storage," Vortexa said. Oil production in the two countries has fallen sharply since the United States imposed sanctions which have significantly impacted their ability to sell crude. Iranian crude exports in May were around 400,000 barrels per day according to tanker data and industry sources. In January-May 2019, oil floating off Venezuela accounted for 23% of global floating storage, rising to 32% in the second quarter so far. This compares with 11% in 2018. There are currently 13 vessels in long-term storage floating off the Venezuelan coast, Vortexa data shows.

The Economic Times - 22.06.2019

<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/oil-in-floating-storage-hit-near-two-year-high-in-may/69891998>

Rising input costs may force hike in steel prices

Record high raw material prices may force Indian steelmakers to increase steel prices as it becomes difficult for them to maintain spreads, but weak demand in the short term with spiralling imports could be a challenge. Companies had already raised prices of some flat and long products in the beginning of June, in the range of Rs 500 and Rs 750 per tonne in the monthly spot market and are looking at the response before they decide to raise prices further to "enhance the spreads". Iron ore price has shot up by more than half since the beginning of this year, touching the \$110 per tonne mark in June while price of imported coking coal has also remained upward of \$200 per tonne. The combined movements of the raw material has put pressure on the spreads. At the same time, a liquidity crunch in the market has affected demand while more than half a million tonne of steel imports are eating into the share of domestic steel every month. "We have tried the possibility of increases in some products and need to see how it goes in various parts of the country and are watching the space as to how we can enhance the spreads a little better," Jayant Acharya, director of commercial and marketing at JSW Steel, told ET.

The Economic Times - 20.06.2019

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/market/commodities/news/rising-input-costs-may-force-hike-in-steel-prices/articleshow/69867513.cms>

Government looks to give more protection to steel companies

The commerce department and the steel ministry have joined hands to protect Indian steel makers, who have for long complained of adverse impact from imports, although trade data does not suggest a massive surge in import of the key industrial commodity. While there are concerns that the protectionist move will result in higher domestic prices, government sources said that during a meeting with industry representatives, steel minister Dharmendra Pradhan and commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal extracted a promise that steel manufacturers will provide the metal at FOB export price to exporters. The two ministries will notify the benchmark price from time to time, which many see as complicating the market dynamics. During the last financial year, steel imports went up 20% to \$12.6 billion, although the industry is complaining of a surge from some of the countries with which India has free trade agreements - South Korea, Japan and some of the Asean nations. During the year overall imports went up by over 10%. The steel manufacturers believe that protection is warranted as demand has stayed flat and so have domestic price. Besides, they are feeling pressure as construction work has slowed down, probably due to elections.

The Times of India - 21.06.2019

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/govt-looks-to-give-more-protection-to-steel-companies/articleshow/69882732.cms>

Domestic Air Passenger Traffic Grows 3 % in May

Domestic air passenger traffic saw a rebound in May as it increased by 2.96% after a slump in April, according to the data released by aviation regulator DGCA on Tuesday. In April, domestic air passenger traffic had dropped by 4.5% over the same period last year. The domestic air traffic in May this year consisted of 12.20 million passengers as compared to 11.85 million passengers in the same month last year, a jump of 2.96%, as per the data. Suspension of operations by Jet Airways on April 17 due to lack of funds was considered to be one of the primary reasons why domestic air traffic saw a fall in that month. IndiGo maintained its lead position with 49% share of the domestic passenger market in May, the data showed. SpiceJet's market share increased from 13.1% in April to 14.8% in May, giving it the number two spot, as per the data. The market share of Air India, GoAir, AirAsia and Vistara were 13.5 %, 11.1 %, 6.3 % and 4.7 %, respectively, in May this year. "During May 2019, a total of 746 passenger related complaints had

India steel ministry seeks higher import duties to deter Chinese imports

India's steel ministry has sought an immediate increase in import duties on finished steel products to 15% from a range of 7.5% to 12.5%, citing a threat from Chinese imports and excess global capacity, an internal note reviewed by Reuters showed. The steel ministry has proposed the higher duties as part of its recommendations to the finance ministry for the upcoming 2019/20 budget that is due out on July 5. "The U.S.-China trade war is threatening Indian markets as China looks for alternative markets" for its steel exports, India's steel ministry said. Citing the vulnerability of local mills, the ministry said the nation's steel sector needs "protection from unfairly traded cheap steel imports" as well as lower input costs. "Peak rates (for all steel products) may be raised to 25% to meet any contingency arising from potential adverse global market turmoil," it said. Existing anti-dumping and countervailing duties have been rendered ineffective by the volatility in steel prices, the ministry said. The steel ministry said government revenues could increase by 13.66 billion rupees (\$196.1 million) if the import duties were implemented, although it is the finance ministry that makes the final decision.

Business Today - 22.06.2019

<https://www.businesstoday.in/current/economy-politics/india-steel-ministry-seeks-higher-import-duties-to-deter-chinese-imports/story/358163.html>

India to generate over 2 million outbound tourists annually by 2020: Report

India is estimated to generate over 2 million outbound luxury and MICE tourists annually by 2020, reinforcing the country's influence as a key source market for MICE and luxury travel, according to a new report by the organisers. According to figures published ahead of the 7th Annual MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions) India and Luxury Travel Congress (MILT), the tourism market is expected to reach USD 9 billion by 2025. The MILT Congress will be held from July 17-18 in Delhi and from July 23-24 in Mumbai. India's outbound MICE tourism market is expected to reach US\$ 9 Billion by 2025, and in 2020 India is expected to generate more than 2 Million outbound MICE tourists, according to the organisers of the MICE India and Luxury Travel Congress. Emphasizing on the growth trends of the MICE industry, Stephanie Tanpure, VP Sales, Sands Resorts Macao said, "We are projecting a very buoyant 2019 as far as

been received by the scheduled domestic airlines. The number of complaints per 10,000 passengers carried for the month of May 2019 has been around 0.61," the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said.

The Economic Times - 19.06.2019

<https://epaper.timesgroup.com/Olive/ODN/TheEconomicTimes/shared/ShowArticle.aspx?doc=ETKM%2F2019%2F06%2F19&entity=Ar00502&sk=F6FDB181&mode=text>

Demand for logistics, warehousing outstrips supply in India

Demand for logistics and warehousing space in India outstrips supply, reveals JLL's latest report, titled 'Indian Logistics and Warehousing: Tracing the Lifecycle'. According to the report, the annual demand of around 32 million square feet has outstripped the supply of 31 million square feet. This has happened for the first time in the last four years. With the January-March period of 2019 witnessing 8.4 million square feet of absorption, it is expected to clock around 38 million square feet by end of 2019. "With high demand, lease transactions have remained high so far," the report said. "Alongside the rise in transactions, the share of Grade A spaces leases have also gone up in the past four years," it added. Of the total 32 million square feet of industrial and logistics leases in 2018, 56 per cent were Grade A spaces. Sectors such as 3PL/logistics, engineering, auto & ancillary, e-commerce, FMCG, retail, and telecom and white goods have remained the biggest demand drivers. As a result of the high demand, logistics sector is expected to grow to \$215 billion by 2020. Ramesh Nair, CEO & Country Head, JLL India said, "Favourable investment regulations have made the deployment of development funds a lot easier than it used to be in the past.

The Hindu Business Line - 20.06.2019

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/logistics/demand-for-logistics-warehousing-outstrips-supply-in-india/article28073119.ece>

Warehouse leasing witnesses 77% growth in FY19: report

The warehouse space leasing has witnessed a growth of 77 per cent year-on-year from April 2018 to March 2019 period, according to a report launched by a real estate consulting firm Knight Frank here on Wednesday. The report titled, 'India Warehousing Market 2019' mentioned that the manufacturing sector which accounts for 80 per cent of warehousing market is estimated to be at 68 million sqm (739 million sq. ft) in 2019 and is expected to grow to 86 million sqm (922 million

meetings and events. I think the Global meeting and events industry should also expect some great results next year. We are not only seeing more and more events, but the average size of these events are growing."

The Economic Times - 19.06.2019

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/travel/india-to-generate-over-2-million-outbound-tourists-annually-by-2020/articleshow/69852349.cms>

Total stock of warehousing space to reach 344 million sq ft in 4 years: JLL India report

The total stock of warehousing space is estimated to double in the next four years to 344 million sq ft in eight major cities on rising demand from third party logistics, e-commerce and automobile players, according to a report by JLL India. "The year 2018 saw Indian warehousing sector coming of age, outshining some of the conventional real estate asset classes and attracting global investors," the report said. It noted that 2018 witnessed 22 percent year-on-year growth in total stock in Grade A & B warehousing space in eight major cities at 169 million square ft compared to 138 million square ft a year ago. The consultant projected the total stock of warehousing space to reach 344 million sq ft in the next four years in eight major cities namely Delhi-NCR, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune and Ahmedabad. The demand or absorption for warehousing space clocked an unprecedented 63 percent year-on-year growth to 31.8 million square ft last year from 19.7 million square ft in 2017."The robust growth in absorption reflects demand outstripping supply and vacancies dropping below 10 percent level for the first time ever," JLL said.

Moneycontrol - 24.06.2019

<https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/business/real-estate/total-stock-of-warehousing-space-to-reach-344-million-sq-ft-in-4-years-jll-india-report-4128011.html>

Kolkata tops in warehousing leasing volume: Report

Among top eight cities, Kolkata has emerged as the fastest growing market in the country in warehousing leasing, a report by a global property consultancy firm said. The 'India Warehousing Market 2019' report by the Global property consultancy firm, Knight Frank, said Kolkata witnessed highest YoY surge, with 191 per cent in warehousing leasing volume of 4.7 million sq. ft in 2018. Kolkata was followed by Bengaluru and Hyderabad, growing at 147 per

sq. ft) by 2024. "Organised warehousing developers are steadily seeing more demand from occupier groups and sectors like e-commerce, retail, manufacturing etc. The string of policy and regulatory reforms unveiled by India in recent times such as implementation of GST, Make in India has accelerated the entry of international institutional players in Indian warehousing and logistics park," said Balbir Singh Khalsa, National Director, Industrial and Asset Services, Knight Frank India. Demand of large sized warehousing in the tier 2 cities is also on the rise and is showing a big growth potential, he added. According to the report, Kolkata witnessed highest year-on-year surge with 191 per cent in the warehousing leasing volume followed by Bengaluru and Hyderabad which witnessed growth of 147 per cent and 96 per cent respectively.

The Hindu Business Lines - 20.06.2019

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/logistics/warehouse-leasing-witnesses-77-growth-in-fy19-report/article28074070.ece>

Cargo volumes across major ports flat in May

Cargo volume across major ports was flat in May 2019 YoY (+5.7% in Apr'19; +3% in FY19; as per Indian Ports Association) on subdued POL* volume (down 1%; 36% share) and thermal coal volume (down 11%; 15% share) and flat coking coal volume (8% share). However, iron ore volume rebounded (+27% aided by lower base; 8% share) and container volume grew 9% (22% share). Among containers, JNPT tonnage vol grew 6% YoY (+3%/ 7% in April'19/ FY19) and non-JNPT tonnage vol was up healthy 12% YoY (+8%/ 10% in April'19/ FY19). Railway cargo volume grew 3% YoY (+3%/ 5% in April'19/ FY19) on similar rise in coal, while iron ore volume was up strong 18% YoY. Container volume grew 7% YoY on healthy Exim volume growth (10% YoY), while domestic volume declined 4% YoY. Kribhco operates container trains and manages ICDs and PFTs across Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat. Concor to commence coastal movement on India's east coast and Bangladesh; operates 2 coastal ships. Truck rentals declined 1-1.5% in May '19 (11-15% decline since Nov'18) on slowdown in factory output which led to oversupply of cargo vehicles in open freight market. Railways' board places additional Rs 2,600-crore order for 9,468 wagons (backlog of 25,000 wagons). Vizhinjam port project delayed (expected time line for phase I completion was Dec'19).

The Financial Express - 22.06.2019

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/analyst-corner-cargo-volumes-across-major-ports-flat-in-may/1615152/>

cent and 96 per cent in 2018 over 2017. E-commerce and third party logistics (3PL) providers were the biggest occupiers to have picked up warehousing space in Kolkata in 2018, the report said. Kolkata has become a major warehousing hub serving the primary requirements of the entire eastern belt of the country, Knight Frank director (Kolkata) Swapan Dutta said. The clusters which saw highest growth are Dankuni and the suburbs, Durgapur Expressway and Old Delhi Road (NH-19 [Old NH-2]), National Highway-16 (Old NH-6), Taratala Maheshtala and Madhyamgram Barasat, he said.

The Economic Times - 20.06.2019

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/property/-/cstruction/kolkata-tops-in-warehousing-leasing-volume-report/articleshow/69869857.cms>

Private equity funds pump in \$1.1 billion in logistics, warehousing sector

Private equity (PE) funds have pumped in excess of \$1.1 billion in the logistics and warehousing sectors between the first quarter of 2017 and the first quarter of 2019, as against zero investment in 2015 and 2016 combined. Infrastructure status, the multi-modal logistics park policy, and implementation of the GST had all led to PE firms' greater interest in the logistics and warehousing sectors. Shobhit Agarwal, managing director and chief executive of ANAROCK Capital, said that Bengaluru, Chennai and Hyderabad saw maximum interest by investors, followed by Mumbai and Pune. "The logistics sector had a massive jump-start in the first quarter of 2019, when PE players pumped in nearly \$200 million into cities like Bengaluru, Chennai and Pune," said Agarwal, adding that there is immense opportunity, backed by the growing demand from e-commerce businesses in the last two years; the logistics and warehousing sectors are consequently upgrading to higher levels. This shift was visible in various small Grade B and C warehouses converting into large Grade A warehouses equipped with modern facilities — a transformation that has caught the eye of PE entities in the US, Canada and Singapore, to pump in funds, he said.

Business Standard - 22.06.2019

https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/private-equity-funds-pump-in-1-1-billion-in-logistics-warehousing-sector-119062200809_1.html

PFC appoints Ravinder Dhillon as director projects

Ravinder Singh Dhillon took over as director (projects) in Power Finance Corporation, the company said in a statement. Presently serving as an executive director in PFC, Dhillon has more than 34 years of experience in various areas of power sector. An electrical engineer with Post Graduation in Power Systems from IIT Delhi, he had worked with Bharat Heavy Electricals and Central Electricity Authority prior to joining PFC. In PFC, he has worked in various capacities for over 25 years, handling Project Appraisal, Business Development, Stressed Assets Revival and Monitoring of projects.

The Economic Times - 18.06.2019

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/company/corporate-trends/pfc-appoints-ravinder-dhillon-as-director-projects/articleshow/69786609.cms>

PESB names Kesavan as HPCL finance director; ONGC left in lurch

Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB), the government's head-hunter, has picked R Kesavan as the new finance director of state-run oil refiner Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL). The selection of Kesavan, who is with HPCL for 33 years, further dashes the hopes of state-run oil explorer Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd (ONGC) of being recognised as a promoter of HPCL with attendant powers to name directors to the oil refiners board. Kesavan is currently an executive director (corporate finance) at HPCL and since March 1 has been designated the chief financial officer (CFO) of the company after J Ramaswamy superannuated from the post of finance director and CFO on February 28 this year.

The Hindu Business Line - 20.06.2019

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/companies/pesb-names-kesavan-as-hpcl-finance-director-ongc-left-in-lurch/article28073392.ece>