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IN THIS ISSUE

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SPOTLIGHT

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Tariff War – Trump's Powerplay or Beginning of a Long War?

Introduction

The global economic landscape underwent a seismic shift during the presidency of Donald Trump, characterized by a deliberate departure from decades of established free trade orthodoxy. At the heart of this transformation lay the imposition of sweeping tariffs on imports from major trading partners, including China, Canada, and Mexico. This was not a series of isolated actions, but rather a central pillar of Trump's 'America First' agenda, a philosophy rooted in economic nationalism and a belief that previous trade agreements had disadvantaged American workers and industries. For decades, the United States had championed multilateral trade agreements, seeking to reduce barriers and foster global economic integration. However, Trump's administration argued that these agreements had led to the erosion of American manufacturing, the loss of jobs, and the growth of substantial trade deficits. He posited that the United States had been exploited by unfair trade practices, particularly by China, and that a more assertive approach was necessary to protect American interests. The imposition of tariffs was designed to serve multiple objectives. Firstly, it aimed to rectify what the administration perceived as unfair trade imbalances, seeking to 'bring jobs back' to American soil. Secondly, it sought to incentivize domestic manufacturing by making imported goods more expensive, thereby encouraging businesses to produce within the United States. Furthermore, the tariffs were wielded as a tool of geopolitical leverage, intended to pressure other nations on a range of issues, from border security to the flow of illicit narcotics. However, these protectionist measures ignited a firestorm of international reaction, triggering retaliatory tariffs from affected nations and sparking fears of a full-blown global trade war. The ensuing economic disruptions, coupled with the strain on international relations, underscored the complex and interconnected nature of the modern global economy, and the potential consequences of unilateral trade actions. The legacy of these policies continues to be debated, with lasting implications for international trade and economic cooperation.

How do Tariffs work?

Tariffs, in their most basic form, are taxes levied on imported goods. These taxes are collected by a nation's customs authorities at the border or point of entry. The financial burden of these tariffs initially falls upon the importing companies, who are required to pay the specified tax amount to the government before their goods can enter the domestic market. However, the economic impact of tariffs rarely stops there. Ad Valorem Tariffs are the most common type, calculated as a fixed percentage of the imported good's value. For example, a 25% ad valorem tariff on a USD 100 item would result in a USD 25 tax. Specific Tariffs are fixed amounts charged per unit of the imported good, regardless of its value. For instance, a USD 2 tariff per kilogram of sugar. Compound Tariffs are another type that combines both ad valorem and specific tariffs. The revenue generated from tariffs goes to the government imposing them. Historically, tariffs were a significant source of government income, but in modern economies, their primary purpose is usually to protect domestic industries. Importing companies, faced with the added cost of tariffs, typically pass these costs onto wholesalers, retailers, and ultimately, consumers. This results in higher prices for imported goods within the domestic market.

The Trump administration's trade policies were characterized by a significant increase in the use of tariffs, particularly against major trading partners. Key examples include: Tariffs on Steel and Aluminum, imposed in 2018, targeted steel and aluminum imports from various countries, including allies, citing national security concerns. These tariffs were 25% on steel and 10% on aluminium. The administration initiated a series of escalating tariffs on Chinese goods, targeting a wide range of products. These tariffs were intended to address what the administration perceived as unfair trade practices, intellectual property theft, and the large trade deficit with China. Initially, 10% tariffs were placed on many goods, then those were increased to 25% on many items. During the renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the administration imposed tariffs on steel and aluminium imports from Canada and Mexico. These actions added tension to the trade negotiations. Adding to the trade tension between the US and Canada, tariffs were applied to energy products.

Tariffs directly contribute to inflation, as consumers pay higher prices for imported goods. Domestic businesses that rely on imported materials or components face higher costs, making them less competitive in both domestic and international markets. Tariffs often lead to retaliatory tariffs from affected countries, creating a trade war that harms all parties involved. This can lead to a reduction in exports. Tariffs can disrupt global supply chains, forcing businesses to find alternative sources of materials and components, which can be costly and time-consuming. While tariffs are intended to protect domestic industries, they can also harm industries that rely on imported inputs. Trade disputes can strain international relations and create geopolitical tensions. Proponents of tariffs argue that they protect domestic industries, create jobs, and reduce trade deficits. Critics argue that tariffs harm consumers, businesses, and the overall economy and that they often lead to retaliatory measures.

Broader Context for Tariffs

Traditionally, tariffs have served as economic tools to correct trade imbalances and protect domestic industries. However, the Trump administration's deployment of tariffs transcended these conventional uses, venturing into the realm of geopolitical strategy. While tariffs have historically addressed economic concerns, the administration's rationale incorporated national security and foreign policy objectives, marking a significant departure from established practices. Traditionally, tariffs were used to protect infant industries, generate revenue, address unfair trade practices, and correct trade imbalances. The Trump administration, however, invoked a national emergency, citing the interconnected challenges of illegal immigration and the fentanyl crisis. This framing positioned tariffs not merely as economic measures, but as instruments of national security. The administration argued that Mexican drug cartels, operating with alleged complicity from elements within Canada, were the primary sources of fentanyl, fueling the US opioid epidemic and that illegal immigration from Mexico and Central America posed a national security threat. Consequently, they asserted that tariffs were necessary to pressure Mexico and Canada into taking decisive action against illegal drug production and immigration flows. This approach effectively weaponized tariffs, transforming them from economic tools into geopolitical leverage, and sought to link trade policy to broader foreign policy objectives, using economic pressure to achieve desired outcomes in areas beyond trade. This strategy, however, carried significant geopolitical implications.

The imposition of tariffs on close allies like Canada and Mexico strained diplomatic relations, undermining established partnerships. Critics argued that this approach risked alienating key allies, making it more difficult to address shared challenges. The interconnected nature of modern supply chains meant that tariffs could disrupt the flow of goods and services, affecting businesses and consumers in all affected countries, especially with the close trade relationship between the US, Canada, and Mexico. The use of tariffs as a political bargaining tool set a precedent for economic coercion, potentially leading to a more volatile and unpredictable international trade environment as other global powers could adopt similar tactics. Furthermore, the Trump administration's unilateral approach to trade policy undermined multilateral institutions and agreements, potentially weakening the rules-based international trading system. The use of tariffs to apply pressure on other nations has created increased global tensions, potentially negatively affecting many areas of international cooperation. There is also much debate about the actual effectiveness of using tariffs in this way, with many arguing that diplomatic solutions would be far more effective in solving the problems of drug trafficking and illegal immigration.

The Global Retaliation

China has swiftly retaliated against Trump's 10% tariffs with 10-15% levies on US agricultural goods and energy products. Additionally, Beijing added US tech and aviation firms to an unreliable entity list. They have also opened an antitrust probe into Google. The exports of critical minerals essential for high-tech manufacturing have been limited These measures signal China's intent to counterbalance US pressure without escalating too quickly. While these retaliations hurt specific US industries, such as soybean farmers and energy exporters, China has so far refrained from more extreme economic countermeasures, leaving the door open for negotiations.

Initially delaying retaliation, Mexico committed to deploying 10,000 National Guard troops to the US-Mexico border to curb drug trafficking. In return, Trump agreed to a temporary pause on tariffs. However, after the tariffs were implemented, Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum labelled them unjustified and announced plans for countermeasures, including tariffs on US goods and non-tariff restrictions. The Mexican government has also increased drug enforcement efforts, reporting the seizure of 20 million doses of fentanyl since the start of Sheinbaum's presidency. However, Mexican officials argue that using tariffs as a punitive measure undermines cooperation between the two nations and strains diplomatic relations.

Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau strongly opposed the tariffs, calling them a very dumb thing to do. Canada responded by imposing retaliatory tariffs worth 30 billion Canadian Dollars immediately and an additional 125 billion Canadian Dollars in 21 days. The Canadian government also threatened to cut electricity exports to the US, a move that could significantly impact energy supplies in states like Michigan, New York, and Minnesota. Trudeau's administration is also considering legal action under the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), arguing that Trump's tariffs violate the free trade pact. The Canadian economy, which is deeply integrated with the US through cross-border supply chains, is at risk of economic slowdown if the trade war escalates further.

Impact on India

The ongoing global trade wars have created a complex and multifaceted impact on Indian companies and the Indian economy. The concept of reciprocal tariffs presents a significant challenge, as the imposition of tariffs mirroring India's own could severely hamper key export sectors, including pharmaceuticals, gems and jewellery, textiles, and automobiles, by increasing costs and reducing their competitiveness in the American market. Furthermore, the disruption of established global supply chains, in which India is deeply integrated, introduces increased costs for imported components and materials, adversely affecting Indian manufacturing. India's reliance on certain imports, notably active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) from China, renders it particularly vulnerable to the ripple effects of trade tensions between the US and China. Trade uncertainties also contribute to currency volatility, leading to fluctuations in the Indian rupee's value. A weaker rupee increases the cost of essential imports, such as crude oil, triggering inflationary pressures. However, amidst these challenges, opportunities arise for India to diversify its trade relationships, strengthening ties with other nations and regional blocs to mitigate reliance on any single market. India can also position itself as an alternative manufacturing hub for companies seeking to diversify their supply chains. The substantial trade relationship between the

US and India means that changes in tariff policies can significantly impact bilateral trade flows, affecting both exports and imports. While some domestic industries may benefit from reduced competition from imports, others that rely on imported inputs may face increased costs. In response, India is actively engaged in trade negotiations with the US and other nations, crucial for mitigating the negative impacts of trade disputes. The "Make in India" initiative aims to boost domestic manufacturing and reduce reliance on imports, enhancing India's resilience in the face of global trade uncertainties. Simultaneously, India is pursuing trade agreements and partnerships with countries in Southeast Asia, Europe, and other regions to diversify its trade partners. Ultimately, strengthening the domestic economy is a key factor in withstanding global economic shocks. Therefore, while trade wars pose challenges, they also present opportunities for India to strengthen its domestic economy, diversify its trade relationships, and enhance its role in the global marketplace.

Future Outlook and Implications

While Trump's strategy aims to strengthen US manufacturing, it risks escalating global trade tensions. His administration has hinted at imposing 25% tariffs on European goods, potentially disrupting trade with the EU. The possibility of a broader trade war threatens to slow global economic growth, especially if more countries retaliate. If trade tensions continue to rise, global supply chains could face long-term disruptions, forcing companies to rethink sourcing strategies and relocate manufacturing. While this could, in theory, boost domestic production in the US, the transition would be costly and time-consuming, potentially leading to job losses in sectors that rely on international trade. The coming months will determine whether Trump's aggressive trade policy yields economic benefits or leads to prolonged financial turbulence. With negotiations ongoing, the world watches closely to see if diplomacy or escalation will prevail. The outcome of this trade war could shape global economic policies for years to come, influencing how countries approach tariffs, free trade agreements, and economic alliances in an increasingly interconnected world.

(References – BBC, Deccan Chronicle, Live Mint, The Hindu, The Indian Express)

EXPERT OPINION

Greenvissage

Mahakumbh 2025 – A unique confluence of Faith and Economy!

By Amit Chandak, Managing Partner, Greenvissage

Background

There are few events in the world that can match the sheer magnitude and mystique of the MahaKumbh Mela. A spiritual spectacle of unparalleled scale, it is where faith becomes tangible, devotion takes form, and millions move as one, bound by an ancient tradition that transcends time. In 2025, the sacred city of Prayagraj once again transformed into the epicentre of this divine confluence, welcoming an ocean of humanity—pilgrims, sages, scholars, and seekers—each drawn by the promise of spiritual purification and celestial blessings. But the MahaKumbh Mela is more than just a religious congregation; it is an economic force, a cultural renaissance, and an event that reshapes the very fabric of the region. The sheer scale of the gathering fuels industries far and wide, creating a ripple effect that touches tourism, infrastructure, commerce, and employment. Every twelve years, this ancient festival injects billions into the economy, revitalizing businesses, artisans, and local communities, while simultaneously showcasing India's rich heritage to the world.

For centuries, the Kumbh Mela has mesmerized historians, travellers, and scholars. From Megasthenes in the Mauryan era to Xuanzang, the Chinese monk of the 7th century, and later, Mark Twain, the event has been described as a marvel of human endurance and unwavering faith. Yet, with such a monumental human movement comes an equally colossal environmental footprint. In today's world, as economies grow and climate concerns intensify, the MahaKumbh Mela stands at a crossroads. The very waters of the sacred Ganges, which pilgrims revere as the giver of life and salvation, are burdened by pollution. Tonnes of plastic waste, unchecked human activity, and the strain on resources push the delicate ecological balance to its limits. While the MahaKumbh is a symbol of divine purity, its impact on the land, air, and water raises crucial questions about sustainability. Can India continue to harness its economic potential while ensuring that its environmental sanctity remains unscathed? Can the grandeur of the MahaKumbh be preserved without compromising the very elements—earth, water, and air—that sustain it?

The Kumbh Economy

The MahaKumbh Mela 2025 transcended its status as the world's largest religious gathering, emerging as a formidable economic powerhouse for India. A staggering 660 million devotees converged upon Prayagraj over 45 days, fueling both national and regional economies to unprecedented levels. It garnered global recognition, attracting delegations from 76 countries. Over 5 million Nepalese pilgrims attended, alongside visitors from 27 other nations. Notable attendees included the King of Bhutan and philanthropist Laurene Powell Jobs, who described the event as a profoundly spiritual experience. The event also witnessed significant government and corporate engagement, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, top ministers, and prominent industrialists like Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani in attendance. The event spurred a dramatic employment surge across various sectors.

The sheer scale of economic activity was remarkable, with estimated transactions exceeding INR 3 trillion, or USD 360 billion, solidifying Maha Kumbh Mela's position as one of the most economically impactful events globally. This influx of capital directly and indirectly benefited over 6 million individuals through employment opportunities spanning tourism, hospitality, retail, transportation, and trade. Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran underscored Mela's pivotal role in propelling India towards its 6.5% GDP growth target for FY25, particularly through a significant surge in consumption expenditure during the fourth quarter. The Uttar Pradesh government's INR 75 billion investment in infrastructure, with contributions from both state and central governments, laid the groundwork for long-term regional benefits. This investment facilitated the development of new roads, flyovers, underpasses, sanitation projects, and public utilities. Key infrastructure enhancements included 12 kilometres of paved ghats, 1,850 hectares of parking space, 31 pontoon bridges, 67,000 streetlights, 150,000 toilets, and 25,000 public accommodations. The economic impact extended beyond Prayagraj, invigorating Varanasi, Ayodhya, and surrounding towns through increased pilgrimage tourism, local retail and textile industries, Ayurveda and wellness services, and tech-driven event management and banking.

Tourism and hospitality experienced near-total occupancy rates in hotels, guesthouses, and tent cities. The Mela grounds spread over 4,000 acres, offered opportunities ranging from budget-friendly homestays to ultra-luxurious accommodations. The Uttar Pradesh government had set up 1.6 lakh tents, including 2,200 high-end ones. Luxury accommodations like Sangam Nivas charged up to INR 1 lakh per night for premium amenities. The food and beverage industry saw record-breaking sales for both restaurants and street vendors. Companies such as RR Hospitality invested over INR 12 crore in setting up food courts, with international brands like Starbucks and Domino's also securing a presence. Transportation and logistics sectors thrived, with taxis, buses, railways, and boat services operating at peak capacity, exemplified by one boatman's family earning INR 3 billion in 45 days. Retail and religious merchandise saw unprecedented demand for items like idols, rudraksha beads, saffron robes, and Ganga Jal. Furthermore, thousands of additional personnel were recruited for security, sanitation, and health services. Financial activity was robust, with 16 banks establishing branches within the Mela premises, handling INR 3.7 billion in transactions. The State Bank of India recorded the highest deposit volume, and digital transactions, including mobile ATMs and UPI, dominated financial activity, reducing the need for cash. Technological innovations and AI integration were integral to the event, with the Digital Maha Kumbh initiative featuring a dedicated app, AI chatbot assistance, and Google Maps navigation. The Khoya-Paya Kendra successfully reunited over 54,000 lost individuals with their families.

Environmental Concerns

A river is meant to be a lifeline. But what happens when it's choked with sewage, industrial waste, and human excreta? This is the grim reality of the Ganga—one of India's most revered rivers. Worshipped and bathed in by millions, yet dangerously polluted. The MahaKumbh 2025 witnessed an unprecedented gathering of approximately 600 million devotees over six weeks. This massive congregation, while spiritually significant, posed substantial environmental challenges, particularly concerning pollution. The primary environmental concern during the Maha Kumbh Mela was the water quality of the Ganga and Yamuna rivers. Initial reports from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) indicated that water at several locations in Prayagraj did not meet the primary bathing water quality standards due to elevated faecal coliform levels. The

CPCB's tests revealed high levels of Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD)—a clear marker of pollution. While safe bathing water should have a BOD level below 3 mg/l, readings at the Sangam exceeded this limit even before the Kumbh began. By mid-February, it had spiked to 5.29 mg/l, indicating excessive organic waste. Faecal coliforms are bacteria indicative of sewage contamination, and their presence in high numbers suggests significant pollution, posing health risks to the millions of pilgrims engaging in ritual baths.

Meanwhile, according to the Uttar Pradesh Government, 10 Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) were installed to treat wastewater, ensuring that effluents met environmental standards before being discharged into the rivers. Additionally, seven geo-tubes were deployed as a temporary solution to treat wastewater from 21 untapped drains. Further, to manage the waste generated by the massive influx of pilgrims, authorities set up 150,000 toilets and urinals in the Maha Kumbh area. A monitoring system was in place to track sanitation levels, and approximately 10,000 sanitation workers were engaged in cleaning activities. The government claimed that the river is truly pristine, however, it doesn't explain why the government still has to pour INR 13,000 crore into cleaning it. And why does the spending continue?

The environmental impact of the Maha Kumbh Mela also extends beyond water pollution. The congregation generated vast amounts of solid waste, including plastic waste, food remnants, and other refuse. Effective waste management strategies were crucial to prevent land and water pollution. The influx of millions of pilgrims led to increased vehicular emissions and biomass burning, contributing to air pollution. The large-scale human activity in the region had the potential to disrupt local ecosystems, affecting flora and fauna.

The Way Forward

Kumbh Mela stands as a breathtaking testament to India's rich spiritual and cultural heritage, bringing together millions in a grand celebration of faith, devotion, and unity. The sheer scale of this sacred gathering is awe-inspiring, creating an atmosphere of divine energy and collective consciousness. Beyond its religious significance, Kumbh Mela also serves as a powerful economic engine, fueling tourism, hospitality, transportation, and countless local businesses. The influx of pilgrims, vendors, and international visitors provides a substantial boost to the economy, creating jobs and opportunities that extend far beyond the duration of the festival itself. However, while Kumbh Mela is a marvel of devotion and economic growth, it also presents significant challenges, particularly in terms of environmental sustainability and crowd management. The massive congregation leads to increased pollution, excessive waste, and strain on local resources. Without proper planning, the sacred rivers that draw millions for ritual baths can suffer from contamination, defeating the very essence of spiritual cleansing. The government and organizers must implement better waste management strategies, improve sanitation facilities, and promote eco-friendly practices such as biodegradable materials and efficient water treatment systems. Additionally, managing the safety and well-being of such a vast gathering requires stronger infrastructure, better crowd control measures, and smarter technology-driven solutions. If these concerns are addressed proactively, Kumbh Mela can continue to be a magnificent confluence of faith and festivity while setting an example for sustainable and responsible event management. By striking a balance between tradition and modernity, we can ensure that this grand spectacle remains not just a spiritual and economic boon, but also a model of environmental consciousness and efficient governance for generations to come.

(References – Money Control, The Indian Express)

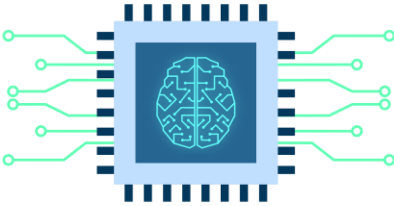
GREENVISSAGE EXPLAINS

What is the US Government's new DOGE department?

The US government has launched a new advisory body called the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), spearheaded by tech billionaire Elon Musk. Created through an executive order by President Donald Trump, DOGE aims to streamline government spending, cut inefficiencies, and reduce the national debt. However, it has faced significant controversy over its authority, transparency, and potential conflicts of interest. Unlike traditional government departments, DOGE is not an officially established federal agency. Instead, it operates as an advisory body, meaning it does not require congressional approval. Each government agency has been assigned at least four DOGE employees, many of whom come from tech backgrounds, to oversee spending and propose cost-cutting measures. Musk, initially volunteering his services, was later designated as an unpaid special government employee. This allows him to work for the government without a full-time commitment, although his involvement has drawn scrutiny due to his extensive business interests with federal contracts. DOGE's stated objective is to save taxpayers money and reduce the national debt, which currently stands at $36 trillion. Musk has promised aggressive measures, initially targeting $2 trillion in savings per year, though he later moderated these expectations. One of the key areas of focus for DOGE is modernizing government IT systems to improve efficiency. Additionally, the department has been involved in: Identifying and eliminating what it claims to be wasteful spending; reducing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives, claiming to have cut over USD 1 billion in associated contracts; Slashing foreign aid by scaling back USAID operations; offering buyouts to two million government employees in an attempt to downsize the federal workforce; and seeking to take control of, and possibly dismantle, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), a regulatory agency set up after the 2008 financial crisis.

Polling suggests that DOGE enjoys broad public support, especially among Republican voters who favour spending cuts. Many Americans back the idea of eliminating bureaucratic inefficiencies, though there is debate over the extent of Musk's influence. Supporters argue that DOGE is bringing much-needed reforms, with conservative think tanks praising its transparency in revealing government spending patterns. Republican Senator Kevin Cramer has stated that DOGE's outsider approach makes it uniquely positioned to challenge inefficiencies without being bogged down by traditional bureaucracy. DOGE has been met with multiple legal challenges from unions, state attorneys general, and watchdog organizations. Critics argue that the department lacks transparency and oversteps its advisory role by actively trying to alter federal budget allocations approved by Congress. Further controversy arises from Musk's business interests, as his companies, including Tesla and SpaceX, have billions of dollars in government contracts. While Musk and Trump deny any conflicts of interest, concerns persist about his dual role as both a federal advisor and a major government contractor. The courts have intervened several times, blocking certain DOGE initiatives, including its attempts to access personal data from the US Treasury. However, a federal judge has allowed DOGE to continue its work while legal challenges unfold. While Musk and Trump insist that DOGE's reforms are essential for reducing government waste, experts question the feasibility of cutting a third of government spending, given that much of it is tied to mandatory programs like Social Security and Medicare. Elaine Kamarck, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, acknowledges that past administrations, such as Bill Clinton's in the 1990s, successfully implemented efficiency measures. However, she argues that DOGE's approach of massive cuts and sweeping layoffs is unrealistic and could harm essential government functions. With a deadline of July 2026 to complete its mission, DOGE's effectiveness will depend on its ability to navigate legal obstacles and prove that its measures lead to meaningful savings without causing widespread disruption. Whether it will be remembered as a transformative force in government reform or a controversial overreach remains to be seen.

(References – BBC, USA Today, Business Standard)



Why is Deepseek considered a threat to AI development?

A Chinese AI model named DeepSeek has sent shockwaves through the global AI industry and financial markets. The model, built with significantly lower costs than its Western counterparts, has raised crucial questions about the future of AI development, compute dependency, and the dominance of major tech firms like OpenAI, Microsoft, Google, and Nvidia. The impact was immediate, wiping out nearly $1 trillion in stock market value as investors reassessed the AI landscape. Until now, the dominant belief in AI research was that developing a foundational AI model required immense computational resources—specifically, highly specialized chips primarily supplied by Nvidia. These chips are costly, and their limited availability due to US export controls was thought to be a major roadblock for Chinese AI ambitions. However, DeepSeek has defied expectations. Despite China's restricted access to Nvidia's latest chips, DeepSeek's researchers managed to create a cutting-edge AI model, reportedly at a training cost of just USD 6 million. This starkly contrasts with the billions of dollars spent by US firms on similar AI development. If true, this finding challenges the long-held assumption that AI innovation is bottlenecked by computing availability and massive funding.

DeepSeek's emergence has major implications for some of the biggest names in AI and semiconductor manufacturing – Are Tech Giants overpaying? If DeepSeek's low-cost training claims hold, it suggests that companies like OpenAI, Microsoft, and Google may have been significantly overspending on AI development. Fewer AI firms needing expensive chips means declining sales for Nvidia, which has dominated the AI hardware industry. Unlike many US models, DeepSeek is open-source. This means anyone can use, modify, and deploy it, making it harder for proprietary AI firms to maintain a competitive edge. As a result, the stock prices of major tech and semiconductor companies have plummeted, reflecting investor fears that DeepSeek may have rewritten the rules of AI development. The biggest revelation from DeepSeek's success is that AI development may not require the financial and computational excesses previously assumed. But the question remains—if DeepSeek could do it, why can't other well-funded players replicate this approach and cut costs? In all likelihood, they will. However, the open-source nature of DeepSeek makes it a formidable challenge for closed AI models. The AI landscape is no longer a battle between a few tech giants; it's a wide-open race where anyone with access to DeepSeek's model can innovate and improve upon it.

Despite the excitement, scepticism lingers. DeepSeek's claims of training a top-tier AI model with limited computing are just that—claims. Researchers and industry experts are scrutinizing DeepSeek's technical papers to verify if the model was indeed trained as efficiently as reported. Furthermore, the quoted USD 6 million cost is likely misleading. This figure appears to account only for chip rental costs, excluding additional expenses like research, experimentation, and salaries. The actual cost of developing DeepSeek could be far higher, meaning the compute efficiency may not be as revolutionary as it seems at first glance. As discussions about DeepSeek continue, an inevitable question arises: Why hasn't India produced a comparable AI model? The answer may lie in the fundamental differences in market structure. A compelling argument highlights protectionism as a key factor. China's AI market is shielded from foreign competition— US AI firms cannot operate freely, ensuring that Chinese alternatives have a guaranteed domestic audience, even if their initial versions are inferior. This incentivizes Chinese researchers and companies to invest in AI development. India, however, is an open market where U.S. AI companies can operate freely. Any Indian AI startup must compete directly with giants like OpenAI, Microsoft, and Google, making it much harder to establish a foothold. Without a protected market, Indian researchers have fewer incentives to invest heavily in foundational AI models.

(References – Live Mint, Business Standard, Your Story)

What is Agritourism and can India embrace it?

Agritourism, an emerging sector in India's tourism landscape, merges agriculture with tourism, offering visitors an authentic rural experience while providing farmers with an alternative source of income. As the nation seeks to boost rural economies and preserve traditional agricultural practices, agritourism has become a key driver for sustainable development. Himachal Pradesh (HP), a state where tourism contributes nearly 7% to the GDP, is actively promoting agritourism as a means of economic growth. Himachal Pradesh, with its diverse agro-climatic conditions, holds immense potential for agritourism. The state can cultivate high-value crops like tulips in the Kangra region, saffron, and medicinal herbs. Students can visit farms to learn about food production and sustainability, while farmers can generate income by hosting educational tours. The promotion of Himalayan herbs can attract nutraceutical tourism focused on health and organic farming. Engaging local youth to share farming stories and develop tourism sites showcasing traditional agricultural practices can further enhance agritourism in the state. Agritourism is a commercial enterprise linking agriculture with tourism, where visitors explore farms for education or entertainment while supporting local farmers. Agritourism boosts the rural economy by providing an additional income stream through farm stays, guided tours, and interactive farming experiences, reducing dependency on unpredictable crop yields. It creates employment for rural artisans, guides, cooks, and transport providers. Unlike mass tourism, agritourism promotes eco-friendly practices, including organic farming and water conservation. This initiative safeguards traditional farming techniques, folk arts, indigenous knowledge, and rural crafts, allowing tourists to experience and support India's agricultural heritage. By fostering interactions between rural and urban populations, agritourism promotes knowledge sharing and cultural exchange. Visitors can engage in hands-on learning about organic farming, animal husbandry, and environmental conservation, with schools and universities organizing farm visits. Various government schemes such as Dekho Apna Desh and the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund support agritourism by improving infrastructure, marketing, and training facilities.

Several Indian states have taken proactive steps to promote agritourism. Maharashtra pioneered agritourism through the Agro-Tourism Development Corporation (ATDC) in 2005. It operates a 28-acre pilot project in Baramati, Pune, and has 328 agritourism centres across 30 districts. Karnataka's Coorg coffee plantations offer visitors an immersive experience in coffee cultivation and processing. Kerala's Agro-Tourism Network provides tourists with the opportunity to explore spice gardens and organic farms. Sikkim, as India's first organic state, promotes sustainable agritourism through farm visits and interactions with local farmers. Punjab offers highlights such as tractor rides, traditional meals like sarson da saag and makki di roti, and folk performances. Bihar's Muzaffarpur litchi orchards and Nalanda's organic farms attract wellness tourists. Rajasthan offers desert agriculture, camel farming, and Bishnoi village experiences that highlight sustainable farming and wildlife conservation. North-East India showcases unique farming practices such as Wet Rice Cultivation in Ziro Valley, Arunachal Pradesh, and Bamboo Drip Irrigation in Meghalaya, attracting eco-conscious travellers. Chhattisgarh's tribal farm tourism in Bastar showcases traditional Mahua brewing and organic farming. Gujarat's Kutch Banni Grasslands feature pastoral tourism with the Rabari community, while Anand promotes dairy tourism with Amul. The Swadesh Darshan Scheme develops theme-based tourism circuits, including a tribal circuit, to boost local economies and cultural tourism. Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Unnat Gram Abhiyan (PMJUGA) is developing 1,000 homestays in tribal areas to support livelihoods and tourism. The Dekho Apna Desh Scheme encourages domestic tourism, urging Indians to explore lesser-known destinations. The National Strategy for Promotion of Rural Homestays (2022) supports agritourism as part of the Atma Nirbhar Bharat initiative.

(References – Wikipedia, The Hindu Business Line, Khaleej Times)

Is Mediation a solution to the backlog of Indian courts?

The Indian judicial system is currently grappling with an alarming backlog of cases, with over 82,000 pending cases in the Supreme Court, 62 lakh in High Courts, and nearly 5 crore in lower courts. The overburdened system has led to prolonged legal proceedings, denying citizens timely justice. Amidst these challenges, mediation is emerging as a viable alternative to reduce judicial delays and facilitate quicker dispute resolution. One of the primary causes of the judicial backlog in India is the low judge-to-population ratio, which stands at just 21 judges per million people, among the lowest globally. This shortage results in an overwhelming workload for judges, slowing down the disposal of cases. Additionally, the rise in litigation due to increased legal awareness and mechanisms such as Public Interest Litigation (PIL) has significantly contributed to the growing number of cases. Many litigants approach courts for even minor disputes, and a substantial number of pending cases involve the government as a litigant, further burdening the judiciary. The adversarial nature of the Indian legal system exacerbates the problem, as it allows multiple interim applications and successive appeals, prolonging the litigation process. Legislative policies, such as the Bihar Prohibition and Excise Act, of 2016, have led to an influx of bail applications in High Courts, adding to the backlog.

Mediation is an ADR process wherein a neutral third party, the mediator, facilitates discussions between disputing parties to help them reach a mutually agreeable solution. This process is voluntary, confidential, and cost-effective, providing an alternative to lengthy litigation. The legal framework supporting mediation in India has seen significant advancements. The Mediation Act, of 2023 mandates pre-litigation mediation for civil and commercial disputes, granting mediation agreements the same legal status as a court decree. This act ensures resolution within 120 days, extendable by 60 days if required. However, cases related to criminal offences, third-party rights, and taxation remain exempt. Additionally, the Commercial Court Act, of 2015 mandates mediation attempts before filing cases in commercial courts, and the Code of Civil Procedure, of 1908 includes ADR methods like arbitration, mediation, and conciliation for resolving disputes outside traditional court proceedings. Mediation plays a crucial role in reducing the judicial backlog by resolving civil, commercial, family, consumer, and property disputes, allowing courts to focus on criminal and constitutional cases. The NITI Aayog has recommended pre-litigation mediation in government cases to minimize legal disputes and ease congestion in courts. Mediation is particularly effective in resolving business, family, and community disputes while preserving relationships, making it an ideal solution for matrimonial cases. Despite its potential, mediation faces several challenges in India. There is a significant lack of awareness among litigants and legal professionals regarding its benefits, leading to a preference for traditional litigation. The enforcement of mediation agreements remains a concern, as the Mediation Council of India (MCI), mandated by the Mediation Act, of 2023, has yet to be established for effective implementation. Additionally, government agencies, involved in 50% of litigation, often prefer prolonged court battles over quick mediation settlements. Since mediation is voluntary and non-binding until an agreement is reached, parties may walk away without resolving disputes. Moreover, court-annexed mediation centres are not available in all courts, limiting access to mediation services. To overcome these challenges, India can adopt global best practices such as the UK's mediation mandate and Italy's compulsory mediation to address the judicial backlog. Institutional reforms, including the establishment of the MCI, would regulate mediation, authorize mediators, and enforce standardized practices. Expanding court-annexed mediation can further ease the backlog and enhance the credibility of the mediation process. Additionally, increasing the judge-population ratio from 21 to 50 per million, as suggested by the Law Commission's 1987 report, can ensure timely justice.

(References – Wikipedia, The Hindu, The Indian Express)

COMPLIANCE UPDATES

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Goods and services tax

OOO **Biometric Authentication for Directors** The Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN) has introduced a new feature to streamline the biometric authentication process for directors of certain companies applying for GST registration. Previously, directors selected for biometric authentication were required to visit a designated GST Suvidha Kendra (GSK) within their jurisdiction. Now, directors of Public Limited, Private Limited, Unlimited, and Foreign Companies can opt to complete their biometric authentication at any GSK within their home state, as registered in REG-01. This enhancement aims to provide greater convenience and flexibility to applicants. Upon being selected for biometric authentication, directors will receive an email with an option to choose a GSK in their home state and a new slot booking link. This is a one-time selection and cannot be changed. This facility is currently available in 33 States/UTs, with Uttar Pradesh, Assam, and Sikkim to be added soon. Notably, if the director is also the Primary Authorized Signatory (PAS), they must still visit the designated jurisdictional GSK. Completing biometric authentication before the PAS visit is advised. (Goods and Services Tax Network)

OOO **Form ENR-03 for Unregistered Dealers to Generate EWB** The Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN) has launched Form ENR-03, enabling unregistered dealers and persons to enrol on the e-Way Bill (EWB) portal and generate e-Way Bills. Effective February 11, 2025, this new feature allows unregistered suppliers of goods to obtain a unique 15-character Enrolment ID, which can be used as an alternative to a GSTIN for generating e-Way Bills, as per Notification No. 12/2024 dated July 10, 2024. To enrol, unregistered persons can access Form ENR-03 under the Registration tab on the EWB portal, provide their PAN and address details, verify their mobile number via OTP, and create login credentials. Once enrolled, they can log in and generate e-Way Bills by using their Enrolment ID as the Supplier/Recipient. (Goods and Services Tax Network)

OOO **EWB Exemption for Precious Metals and Gold** GSTN has issued a clarification regarding the EWB requirements for goods classified under Chapter 71 i.e. Natural or cultured pearls, precious metals, jewellery, etc. According to Rule 138(14) of the CGST Rules, 2017, these goods are generally exempt from mandatory EWB generation, excluding imitation jewellery (HSN 7117). Initially, due to a feature introduced for Kerala's intra-state movement requirements, the EWB portal allowed voluntary EWB generation for these goods under the EWB for Gold category. However, this facility has now been withdrawn. Therefore, taxpayers and transporters are advised that EWB generation is not required for goods under Chapter 71 (except HSN 7117) for movements outside of Kerala. However, Kerala has mandated EWB generation for intra-state movement of these goods through Notification. (Goods and Services Tax Network)

OOO **Hard-locking of Auto-Populated Liability in GSTR-3B** GSTN has announced a delay in implementing the previously planned hard-locking of auto-populated liability in GSTR-3B, which was initially scheduled for the January 2025 tax period. This decision comes in response to numerous requests from the trade seeking additional time to prepare for the change. While the hard-locking feature is currently not being implemented, GSTN has indicated that it will be introduced soon, with prior notification to taxpayers. Therefore, taxpayers are advised to prepare for this upcoming change in GSTR-3B functionality. (Goods and Services Tax Network)

(For queries or more information about goods and services tax, contact our colleague Ashish at ashish.gandhi@greenvissage.com)

Income tax

OOO **Scrutiny of Daily Expenses Sparks Controversy** Recent reports indicate that the Income Tax Department is requesting detailed information from taxpayers regarding daily expenses like monthly rations, toiletries, and even haircuts, fueling public concern and debate. Tax experts explain that the department can compare declared income with bank records and spending patterns to ensure accuracy and that requests for detailed expense information may arise from discrepancies between reported income and perceived lifestyle. Such inquiries are part of a broader effort to refine data analytics and accurately assess tax liabilities, particularly when bank withdrawals are disproportionately low compared to reported income. While the department can request details on various expenses, including medical bills, travel, and investments, some experts question the necessity of such granular scrutiny. Government data suggests that only about 1% of filed returns are thoroughly scrutinized, primarily those exhibiting significant discrepancies between declared income and lifestyle. The department's focus is on identifying individuals with high living standards who report unusually low cash withdrawals, potentially indicating hidden income or undeclared transactions. (Business Standard)

OOO **New Income Tax Bill Expands Search and Seizure Powers to Virtual Digital Space** The newly introduced Income Tax Bill, 2025, proposes to broaden the scope of search and seizure operations by explicitly including virtual digital space, defined as any digital realm facilitating user interaction and communication. This move grants tax authorities the power to access social media, online investment, trading, banking accounts, and email servers during investigations. The bill, which is set to take effect on April 1, 2026, aims to modernize the existing Income Tax Act, of 1961, by clarifying and simplifying provisions. While sources claim the new provision under Section 247, which allows overriding access codes, is merely a restatement of existing powers in simpler language, it explicitly extends these powers to digital platforms. Previously, Section 132 of the existing act allowed searches of physical locations and seizure of electronic records, but the new bill specifically addresses virtual digital spaces, enabling authorities to examine computer systems and digital assets. This includes the ability to override access codes and examine individuals under oath regarding digital holdings. (The Indian Express)

OOO **New Form 16, Form 24Q, and Salary Tax Rules** The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has released a new circular outlining significant changes to tax deduction rules, particularly affecting salaried taxpayers. Effective for the FY 2024-25, the circular introduces revised formats for Form 16 and Form 24Q. Form 16, which underwent amendments in 2023 and 2024, will now provide more detailed information on tax deductions and perquisites, simplifying tax filing for individuals. Form 24Q has been updated with a new column, 388A, to enhance TDS/TCS reporting, facilitating clearer tax reporting for both employers and employees. These changes allow employers to consider Tax Collected at Source (TCS) and other Tax Deducted at Source (TDS) when calculating salary TDS, addressing previous discrepancies and improving cash flow for employees. Additionally, the circular incorporates amendments from the Finance Act 2023, including the revised definition of salary to encompass contributions to the Agniveer Corpus Fund under the Agneepath scheme, with tax benefits available under section 80CCH. The definition of perquisites has also been expanded to include rent-free accommodations and concessional residential facilities provided by employers. (Financial Express)

OOO **Presumptive Taxation Regime for Non-Resident Cruise Ship Operators** The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has notified amendments to Income Tax Rules, 1962, specifying conditions for the applicability of a presumptive taxation regime for non-resident operators of cruise ships. This measure, initially introduced in July to boost investment and employment, aims to simplify taxation for non-residents in the cruise ship industry. The amendments, notified on January 21, establish specific criteria for the presumptive tax regime to apply. These conditions include that the non-resident must operate a passenger ship with a capacity of over 200 passengers or a length of 75 meters or more, designed for leisure and recreation with appropriate dining and cabin facilities. Additionally, the ship must operate on scheduled voyages or shore excursions, touching at least two Indian seaports or the same port twice, and primarily carry passengers rather than cargo. The rules also provide an exemption for foreign companies on lease rentals received from related companies operating cruise ships in India. These changes are designed to promote the cruise ship industry in India by providing clear and favourable tax regulations for non-resident operators. (Business Standard)

OOO **New Tribunal Ruling Restricts Family Trust Beneficiaries** A recent ruling by a tax tribunal has placed new restrictions on family trusts in India, specifically regarding the inclusion of non-relatives as beneficiaries. The decision states that trusts cannot maintain the flexibility to add cousins, nephews, nieces, or other non-relatives as beneficiaries without incurring immediate tax implications. This ruling significantly impacts succession planning, as many families prefer to retain the option to include non-relatives in unforeseen circumstances. Under the Income Tax Act, trusts are exempt from tax on transferred assets only if all beneficiaries are defined relatives. The tribunal's decision means that even trusts with current relative beneficiaries will be taxed upfront if their deeds allow for future inclusion of non-relatives. Tax experts argue that this ruling limits the flexibility necessary for effective succession planning and could hinder the use of trusts as tools to avoid disputes and litigation. Additionally, the tribunal ruled that interest in a partnership firm qualifies as shares and is taxable under section 56(2)(x) of the Income Tax Act, further impacting how assets are transferred into trusts. This decision, which arose from a case involving the Buckeye Trust in Bangalore, has drawn significant attention from tax practitioners. While the ruling may be challenged in higher courts, it sets a precedent that will likely make it more difficult to establish family trusts with the flexibility to include non-relatives as beneficiaries in the future. (Economic Times)

OOO **New Section-to-Section Mapping for New Tax Bill** The Income Tax Department has launched an online utility on its website, providing a section-to-section mapping between the existing Income Tax Act, 1961, and the newly proposed Income Tax Bill, 2025. This allows taxpayers to easily compare corresponding clauses and understand the changes introduced in the new legislation. (Financial Express)

(For queries or more information about income tax, contact our colleague Sneha at sneha.halder@greenvissage.com)

Customs and foreign trade

OOO **Zero Duties on Select Industrial Goods** To preempt potential reciprocal tariffs from the United States, India is exploring the option of proposing zero duties on specific industrial products. With the US reciprocal tariff plan expected to be clarified within a month and a bilateral trade deal anticipated only by late 2025, India is seeking proactive measures to avoid new taxes. A report by the Global Trade Research Initiative suggests that India should propose eliminating tariffs on most industrial products, contingent on a similar move by the US. This strategy involves identifying tariff lines where duty reductions would not negatively impact domestic industries, drawing from India's previous Free Trade Agreement offers to Japan, Korea, and ASEAN. Agriculture may be excluded from this proposal. This initiative aims to mitigate the risk of increased trade barriers between the two countries. (Financial Express)

OOO **10% Import Duty on Lentils (Masur)** The Indian government has introduced a 10% import duty on lentils (Masur), comprising a 5% basic customs duty and a 5% Agriculture Infrastructure and Development Cess (AIDC), effective March 8th. Simultaneously, it has extended the duty-free import of yellow peas until May 31, 2024. These measures, outlined in a finance ministry notification, aim to enhance the domestic availability of pulses. The import of lentils was previously exempt from duty, while the duty-free import of yellow peas, initially allowed in December 2023, has been extended multiple times. (Business Standard)

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Corporate and allied laws

OOO **MCA Plans to Simplify M&A Rules** The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) is working to simplify the rules governing mergers and acquisitions (M&As) in India, with a focus on streamlining procedural requirements and expanding the scope of fast-track approvals. To achieve this, the MCA is engaging in stakeholder discussions with various other ministries to gather inputs before finalizing its proposals. This initiative aligns with the Finance Minister's Budget announcement, which emphasized the government's commitment to rationalizing M&A procedures for faster approvals. The aim is to create a more efficient and conducive environment for corporate restructuring. (Economic Times)

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Finance and banking

OOO **RuPay Credit Card Spending Reaches 16% of Market Share** RuPay has achieved a significant milestone, now accounting for approximately 16% of all credit card spending in India. Dilip Asbe, Managing Director and CEO of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) revealed that nearly half of these RuPay credit card transactions are conducted via credit on the Unified Payments Interface (UPI). This surge in transactions is attributed to the growing number of banks, over

30, issuing RuPay credit cards. The NPCI is further strengthening its position by establishing a new Research & Development (R&D) centre and actively pursuing the internationalization of UPI, indicating its continued expansion and influence in the digital payments landscape. (Economic Times)

OOO **RBI Interest Rate Formula for Small Loans** Digital lenders and microfinance companies in India are urging the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to establish a standardized formula for calculating interest rates on small-ticket loans. This request follows the RBI's recent regulatory actions, which included imposing restrictions on certain non-bank financing companies due to concerns about excessive pricing and high mark-ups. These lenders argue that a clear, regulatory formula would ensure fair pricing for borrowers, prevent disruptions to their business operations and reduce the risk of future regulatory interventions. They are seeking a transparent framework, potentially based on models used in other countries, to provide greater clarity and stability within the small loan market. (Money Control)

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Accounting and management

In Focus: Currency Reserve

A reserve currency is a crucial component of the global financial system, representing a large quantity of currency held by central banks and major financial institutions. These reserves serve several essential purposes, including facilitating international trade, managing exchange rates, meeting international obligations, providing a stable store of value, and enabling investment.

Primarily, they streamline international transactions by eliminating the need for constant currency conversions, especially for commodities like oil and gold, which are often priced in the dominant reserve currency. This practice reduces exchange rate risk for countries engaged in global trade.

Historically, the US dollar has held the position of the primary reserve currency since the Bretton Woods Agreement in 1944. This agreement formalized the dollar's status, with other nations pegging their exchange rates to it, owing to its stability and convertibility to gold at the time.

The dollar's dominance grants the US what is often referred to as an exorbitant privilege, allowing it to finance its debt more easily and exert significant influence over the global financial system.

Currencies like the Euro and the Chinese Yuan, along with the potential of digital currencies, are being considered as possible alternatives.

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Payroll and personal finance

OOO **Insurance Nominations Do Not Override Succession Laws** The Karnataka High Court has ruled that a nominee in an insurance policy does not automatically have absolute rights to the insurance benefits. In the case of Neelavva and Neelamma vs Chandravva and Chandrakala and Hema and Others, Justice Anant Ramanath Hegde clarified that Section 39 of the Insurance Act, 1938, does not supersede personal succession laws, such as the Hindu Succession Act, 1956. While a nominee is authorized to receive the insurance payout, their right is subject to claims from the policyholder's legal heirs. If a legal heir asserts their right, the nominee's claim must defer to the provisions of the relevant succession laws. This ruling emphasizes that insurance nominations are primarily for smooth disbursement of funds, not to negate the rights of legal heirs under established succession laws. (Business Standard)

OOO **ESIC Seeks SEBI Approval to Invest in Stock Market** The Employees’ State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) is planning to invest its surplus funds in the stock market through exchange-traded funds (ETFs). To proceed with this plan, the ESIC is awaiting approval from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) for an exemption from the INR 25 crore per transaction limit. (The Hindu Business Line)

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ECONOMIC INDICATORS

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Key Economic Indicators

Indicator	As on	Current	Prior
GDP Growth (%)	Dec-24	6.20	5.60
Unemployment (%)	Jan-25	8.20	8.30
Inflation (%)	Jan-25	4.31	5.22
Balance of Trade ($bn)	Jan-25	(22.99)	(21.94)
Business confidence	Dec-24	120.00	119.00
Manufacturing PMI	Feb-25	56.30	57.70
Services PMI	Feb-25	59.00	56.50

(Trading Economics)

Global Indices

Index	Country	Change %
NIFTY 50	India	-2.73%
BSE SENSEX	India	-2.86%
NIFTY BANK	India	-2.47%
INDIA VIX	India	-5.80%
DOW JONES	USA	-4.02%
S&P 500	USA	-4.92%
NASDAQ 100	USA	-7.37%
S&P TSX	Canada	-8.86%
BOVESPA	Brazil	-1.18%
DAX	Germany	3.31%
FSTE 100	UK	-1.58%
CAC 40	France	0.67%
FTSE MIB	Italy	2.17%
MOEX	Russia	6.66%
NIKKEI 225	Japan	-5.31%
S&P ASX 200	Australia	-6.15%
SHANGHAI	China	1.45%
HANG SENG	Hong Kong	11.69%
KOSPI	South Korea	1.23%

(Investing.com)

Commodities Future

Commodity	Expiry	Price	Change %
Gold	Apr-25	85,824.00	9.86
Silver	May-25	97,618.00	6.41
Crude Oil	Mar-25	5,892.00	(6.82)
Natural Gas	Mar-25	400.90	25.75
Aluminum	Mar-25	265.55	10.05
Copper	Mar-25	878.90	6.73
Cotton	Mar-25	52,940.00	(2.95)

(MCX India)

Currency Exchange Rates

Pair	Current	Prior	Change %
USD/INR	87.24	85.88	(1.58)
GBP/INR	112.67	105.76	(6.53)
EUR/INR	94.55	88.47	(6.87)
YEN/INR	59.06	54.30	(8.77)

(FBIL India)

Cryptocurrencies

Pair	Crypto	Price	Change %
BTC/USD	Bitcoin	83,818.69	(9.68)
ETH/USD	Ethereum	2,128.91	(34.51)
BNB/USD	Binance	569.94	(17.16)
SOL/USD	Solona	130.77	(30.39)

(Crypto.com)

Bank Policy Rates

Type	Current	Prior	Change %
Repo rate	6.25	6.50	(0.25)
Standing deposit	6.00	6.25	(0.25)
Marginal facility	6.50	6.75	(0.25)
Bank rate	6.50	6.75	(0.25)
Reverse Repo	3.35	3.35	-

(RBI India)

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