



## ECONOMY

### Economic Growth/Reforms

#### 1 Growth trends firming up in Indian economy: OECD

India's economic growth is firming up and prospects are also looking better in most of the other major economies, says Paris-based think tank OECD.

#### 1 Economy to grow 6.5% in 2016, says report

The Indian economy is likely to grow around 6.5% in 2016 as macro-economic conditions seem to be improving on the back of lower crude prices and easing inflation, says a McKinsey & Company report.

#### 1 IMF ups India growth forecast to 7.2% for current fiscal

Terming Indian economy a "bright spot" on the global economic landscape, IMF today raised its growth forecast for the current fiscal to 7.2 per cent, even as it called for steps to revitalize the investment cycle and accelerate structural reforms in the country.

### Public Finance Taxes And Duties

#### 2 Changes in NDA's land Bill only cosmetic

The National Democratic Alliance (NDA) has made nine amendments to its land Bill, tabled in Parliament on Monday. Most of these were cosmetic in nature, leaving the key elements of the original promulgation intact - the lack of need for consent and social impact assessment while acquiring land for private projects; public-private partnerships and government acquisitions.

## CEMENT INDUSTRY

### Growth/Marketing/Demand/Takeover

#### 3 Cementing a vision of sustainability

Philippe Fonta, Managing Director, Cement Sustainability Initiative (CSI), was in Bengaluru recently to chair the CSI's Safety Working Group in India, for the year 2014-15.

#### 3 Cement: Sector earnings at risk in Q4 and FY16

Cement producers are expected to exit FY15 on a weak note. They have not increased prices in the March quarter, despite an increase in freight rates, as demand remained weak.

### New Projects/Expansions/Diversification

#### 4 Holcim's Schmidheiny wants better deal in Lafarge merger

Holcim's largest stakeholder, Thomas Schmidheiny, wants a better deal for the Swiss cement maker's shareholders in its planned merger with Lafarge, SonntagsZeitung reported, citing people close to the Swiss billionaire.



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## Housing & Building Construction

### 4 Some not-so-smart ideas

The Budget numbers for urban development tell an interesting story of enthusiasm overwhelming realism. The emphasis on smart cities in the rhetoric of Arun Jaitley's first Budget last year was backed by the economic muscle of the government, with the allocations for the ministry of urban development being much more than double the actual expenditure in the previous year.

### 5 RBI gives a fillip to affordable housing

A sustained decline in home loans in the under `10 lakh category may have prompted the Reserve bank of India to liberalise housing loan norms.

### 6 Sri Lanka govt reviewing Tatas' \$400 m housing project

Sri Lanka has said it was reviewing a \$400-million housing project by Tata group, weeks after the country's new government said it was looking for a fresh start into the first of- its-kind township plan in the country.

## ENERGY, FUEL & POWER

### Coal

### 7 Coal-mining states to be richer by `71,000 crore

The second phase of the e-auction of 11 coal mines proved to be a bonanza for mineral-rich states, whose revenues increased to `2.05 lakh crore from `1.35 lakh crore in the first phase. Out of the received bids worth `71,027 crore for 30 years (mines life), `59,736 crore is towards royalty and the rest is the auction amount.

### Jaypee Cement Bags Coal Mine in MP, Ambuja in Chhattisgarh

In another revenue bonanza from the ongoing auction of coal mines, the government on Sunday garnered `5,164 crore from sale of two more mines to Jaypee Cement and Ambuja Cements with cumulative proceeds surging to `1.57 lakh crore.

### 8 Power Projects/Generation/Distribution/Tariff

### Sumitomo to set up 4,000 MW project in Andhra Pradesh

Japanese major Sumitomo Corporation has evinced interest in setting up of a 4,000 MW ultra-mega power project in Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh.

## TRANSPORT

### 8 Railway

Rail route may help push India-Pakistan trade



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India wants to explore the option of trading more with Pakistan through the rail route as existing product restrictions on trade through the Attari-Wagah land route and the high cost of sea transportation are acting as hurdles to bilateral trade.

### **LIC to invest `1.5 lakh crore in railways**

The Indian Railways on Wednesday signed a memorandum of understanding with the public insurer Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) to bring in `1,50,000 crore of investments over the next five years to meet its `8.5-crore capital requirement by 2019.

## **Highways/Roads/Bridges**

### **TN road project: final round of talks soon for `5,115 crore World Bank aid**

Final round of negotiations for the `5,115-crore World Bank aided road development project for Tamil Nadu will be held on March 20 in New Delhi, said Rajeev Ranjan, Principal Secretary, Department of Highways & Minor Ports; Government of Tamil Nadu.

### **Govt to build 30 km of roads a day in 2 years, says Gadkari**

The Centre plans to lay 30 kms of roads a day in the next two years, up from the current level of 11 kms a day, Rajya Sabha was informed on Monday (09.03.2015).

### **Land trouble forces MMRDA to reroute Virar-Alibaug corridor**

Problems in acquiring land from locals in Navi Mumbai has forced the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority to alter the Virar-Alibaug Multimodal Corridor (VAMC) plan. The corridor will join the proposed Vadodara- JNPT expressway near Matheran, and continue as a single-highway for 22km before ending at JNPT.

## **Inland Waterways & Irrigation Canals**

### **Maharashtra plans to change how irrigation projects are funded**

The Maharashtra government is planning to make significant changes in how it funds irrigation projects, which it hopes, will help make the state drought-free over the next five years. Under the new rules, the state government will stop fund allocations to irrigation projects where less than 15% of the work has been completed.

## **LABOUR**

### **General**

### **14 Labour Unions to oppose budget proposal on PF**

Trade unions are set to challenge the government over a budget proposal to use unclaimed money lying in two provident funds to build a senior citizens' welfare fund and subsidize the insurance premiums of old people and below poverty level (BPL) card holders.

# **NEWS IN BRIEF**



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## **Under New Cos Act, Firms Can Offer Loans to Staff at Low Interest Rates**

**15** Companies can now offer loans to their employees at low interest rates as the government has relaxed conditions related to loan threshold and interest rate in the Companies Act, 2013.

**17 Tenders – Cement Concrete Roads  
(CC1- CC10)**

**A1 Tenders – Housing  
(T11 – T13)**

**Tenders – Canal Lining  
(T14-T16)**

**Article/Interview  
(A1 – A3)**

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