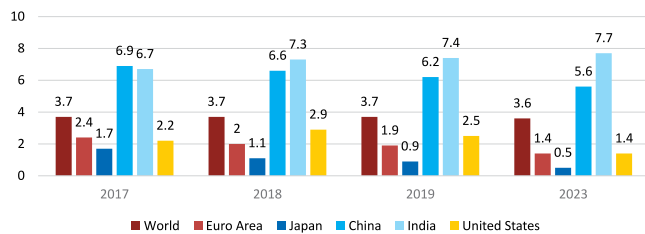


The Economy

World Economy

The steady expansion under way since mid-2016 continues, with global growth for 2018–19 projected to remain at its 2017 level of 3.7%, according to the IMF 2018 World Economic Outlook. However, the expansion has become less balanced and may have peaked in some major economies. Downside risks to global growth including escalating trade tensions, a reversal of capital flows to emerging markets' economies with weaker fundamentals, higher political risks and increasing oil prices, have risen in the past six months and the potential for upside surprises has receded.

Global Growth (Annual % change)



India's growth is expected to increase to 7.3 percent in 2018 and 7.4 percent in 2019 (slightly lower than in the April 2018 World Economic Outlook [WEO] for 2019, given the recent increase in oil prices and the tightening of global financial conditions), up from 6.7 percent in 2017. This acceleration reflects a rebound from transitory shocks (the demonetisation of high value currency and implementation of the national Goods and Services Tax), with strengthening investment and robust private consumption. The proactive initiatives being taken by the Government may push the growth higher in the years ahead.

As we move ahead, the contribution of advanced and emerging economies to world output is witnessing a change as can be seen in the following table:

Classification by World Economic Outlook Groups and Their Shares in Aggregate GDP (Percent of total for world)								
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Advanced Economies	52.1	51.1	50.4	43.6	42.9	42.4	41.8	41.3
United States	19.5	19.1	19.5	16.4	15.9	15.8	15.5	15.3
Emerging Market and Developing Economies	47.9	48.9	49.6	56.4	57.1	57.6	58.2	58.7
China	13.6	14.3	14.7	15.8	16.6	17.3	17.7	18.2
India	5.5	5.6	5.7	6.6	6.8	7.0	7.2	7.4

The share of Advanced Economies in world GDP is decreasing –

from 52.1% in 2010 to 41.3%– whereas that of Emerging Market and Developing Economies increased from 47.9% to 58.7% during the same period.

How the world will look in the coming years?

Global economic power will shift to the E7 economies

In 1995, E7 were half the size of G7

By 2015, E7 were around the same size as G7

And in just 25 years (2040) E7 could be double the size of G7

G7: US, UK, France, Germany, Japan, Canada and Italy
E7: China, India, Indonesia, Brazil, Russia, Mexico and Turkey
Source: PwC and IMF

Emerging markets will dominate the world's top 10 economies in 2050 (GDP at PPPs)				
	2016		2050	
China	1	1	1	China
US	2	2	2	India
India	3	3	3	US
Japan	4	4	4	Indonesia
Germany	5	5	5	Brazil
Russia	6	6	6	Russia
Brazil	7	7	7	Mexico
Indonesia	8	8	8	Japan
UK	9	9	9	Germany
France	10	10	10	UK
	■ E7		■ G7	

Source: IMF and PwC

In this changing landscape, there is a need for restructuring of Global institutions with greater weightage for emerging economies in the years ahead.

One of the major factors prompting this trend is the way Governments, especially Emerging and developing economies, are initiating measures to improve ease of doing business.

World Bank Ease of Doing business ranking

Top 10 countries and India

Top 10 in 2018	Top 10 in 2019	
New Zealand	New Zealand	Same position
Singapore	Singapore	Same position
Denmark	Denmark	Same position
Korea	Hong Kong	↑
Hong Kong SAR, China	South Korea	↓
United States	Georgia	↑
United Kingdom	Norway	↑
Norway	United States	↓
Georgia	United Kingdom	↓
Sweden	Macedonia	New entrant in the Top 10
India's rank - 100	India's rank - 77	↑

As of now, the advantages of establishing commercial courts, implementation of GST and IBC are not fully factored in the World Bank report. Once these are taken note of, it is likely that there will be a substantial jump in India's ranking in the ease of doing business.

The World Bank in its rankings has credited India's sharp rise on the global scale, registering a massive climb of 23 places to the 77th rank among 190 economies surveyed by it. India has achieved a place in the top 10 improvers for the second consecutive year.

The 10 economies improving the most across three or more areas measured by Doing Business in 2017/18		
Economy	Ease of doing business rank	Change in ease of doing business score
Afghanistan	167	10.64
Djibouti	99	8.87
China	46	8.64
Azerbaijan	25	7.10
India	77	6.63
Togo	137	6.32
Kenya	61	5.25
Côte d'Ivoire	122	4.94
Turkey	43	4.34
Rwanda	29	4.15

The World Bank's ease of doing business measures aspects of regulation affecting 11 areas of the life of a business. It further measures features of labour market regulation, which is not included in this year's ranking. The indicators are used to analyze economic outcomes and identify what reforms of business regulation have worked, where and why.

Where Ranks Improved in India		
	2019	2018
Starting a business	137	156
Dealing with construction permits	52	181
Getting Electricity	24	29
Getting credit	22	29
Trading across borders	80	146
Enforcing contracts	163	164
Where Ranks worsened		
Registering Property	166	154
Protecting minority investors	7	4
Resolving insolvency	108	103
Paying taxes	121	119

The list below, inter alia, enumerates the various measures taken by the Government of India which led the World Bank to

mark India in the higher scheme of ranks:

Introduced or enhanced electronic systems.
Simplified tax compliance processes or decreased number of tax filings or payments.
Strengthened transport or port infrastructure for exports and imports.
Facilitated customs administration for exports and imports.
Introduced or expanded the electronic case management system.
Improved the likelihood of successful reorganization.
Introduced a new restructuring procedure.
Regulated the profession of insolvency administration.
Reformed legislation regulating worker protection and social benefits.

The State governments have been equally supportive of the Central Government's policies in improving the overall business environment in the country.

Although the ranking has improved, we still need to cover a lot of distance to move up in the rankings, especially in the areas of registering property, protecting minority investors, resolving insolvency and paying taxes.

As India continues its march towards becoming a major player on the global scene, there is a need for a continuous engagement among all stakeholders' to identify and implement measures necessary for faster and inclusive growth. These, inter alia, include the need to bridge the trust deficit between the Government and business, increasing bandwidth for reforms, focus on accelerated development of logistics, infrastructure and power sectors, skilling and reskilling the workforce in line with the demands of industry, initiating measures to bring in capital flows and stabilizing rupee, streamlining tax filing and refund of tax credit under GST, initiating measures for greater energy security and providing enough liquidity in the system to meet the growth requirements of the economy. With proactive interaction between Government and business, India should be able to attain its rightful place on the global map in not too distant a future.

Oil prices in 2019—steady or volatile

The volatility in oil prices during 2018 prompted oil analysts to reassess their forecasts for oil prices in 2019. The projection for oil prices in 2019 is expected to be much lower than US\$ 100/barrel. It is good news for emerging economies like India, it is to be seen how long this rally for lower price for crude will continue and in what range will it settle during 2019 in the context of global supply and demand.

Apparently, the US sanctions on Iran on November 4, 2018, US-China trade dispute and possible slowdown in global economy, were factored in making future projections but the waiver by the US for eight economies was probably not in the assumptions and calculations of the analysts and forecasters.

With the announcement of 180 days waiver, the oil prices are now on downward slide from the high of US\$ 86/barrel in early October 2018. Currently, these are below US\$ 60/barrel. Besides, President Trump has been blaming OPEC several times during the year for rising oil prices and ordering its members to take steps to push down the oil prices. The comfort zone for the emerging economies would be in the range of US\$ 50-60 or lower.

World Oil Demand

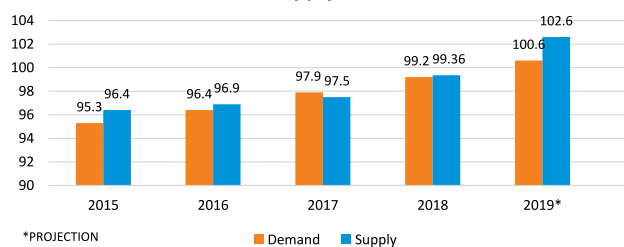
Total oil demand for 2018 is anticipated at 98.79 mb/d. In 2019, world oil demand is forecast to grow by 1.29 mb/d y-o-y with total world consumption to reach 100.6 mb/d.

World Oil Supply

According to International Energy Agency (IEA), in October, world oil output of 100.7 million b/d was 2.6 million b/d higher than

a year ago. For 2019, IEA has raised its forecast for oil output growth from non-OPEC countries to 2.4 million b/d this year and 1.9 million b/d next year. The US will lead output growth, IEA estimating total US oil supply will rise by 2.1 million b/d this year

World Oil Supply and Demand



Source: IEA

The demand and supply for oil may even out in 2018 and according to IEA, the global supply surplus could rise to as much as 2 mb/d in the first half of 2019 based on the trajectory of the current fundamentals.

In case, OPEC and Russia decide to cut production by 1.4 mbps, there may be short term spurt in oil prices cooling down sooner than later. The oil prices are still on downward slide (below US\$ 60/barrel) The oil prices are expected to remain in the range of US\$ 60-70/barrel or below in 2019 unless there is major disruption in the supply of oil.

The Geopolitical factor, which may affect the oil prices is a scenario, in which Iranians accept the offer from President Trump for renegotiation of Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and move towards its conclusion. Any such progress would affect sentiments in the oil market and there may be fall/crash in oil prices. Though it is unlikely to happen.

The developments in Saudi Arabia over Khashoggi's killing may play with the oil market sentiments. In any case, it is highly unlikely that President Trump will upset the applecart with sanctions against Crown Prince or any other drastic action and risk losing the arms deal of US\$ 110 billion with Saudi Arabia. Any knee-jerk reaction from Saudi Arabia to the pressure or accusation against Crown Prince may affect the oil market. The direction of the US-China trade negotiations is on a rough patch. If it affects China negatively, the oil prices may be pushed down further due to slowdown in economy of China.

India's import of crude oil and impact of high oil prices

India's import of crude oil has been steadily increasing and touched 220 MT during 2017-18 costing exchequer of US\$ 87 billion. The escalation in oil prices led to sharp devaluation of Rupee and increase in Current Account Deficit (CAD), which may reach 2.6 % of GDP during this financial year.

The major import of crude oil was sourced from Iraq (45.74MT), Saudi Arabia (36.16MT), Venezuela (18.34MT), Iran (22.59MT), Nigeria (18.11MT) and UAE (14.29MT) in 2016 till Iraq toppled Saudi Arabia to become India's top crude supplier, exporting more than 45 MT of crude to India last financial year.

Iran, which had increased output and export of crude oil after the lifting of economic sanctions in 2016, overtook Venezuela to become the third-largest oil supplier to India in 2016-2017. In 2017-18 too, Iran retained its spot as the third-largest supplier to India.

Higher oil prices and impact on economic indicators of India

Some estimates of impact of high oil prices on India are indicated below:

Nomura: Every \$10/barrel increase in oil prices will increase CPI by 60-70 basis points. Every \$10/barrel rise in the price will worsen India's fiscal balance by 0.1% and current account balance by 0.4% of GDP.

CARE Ratings: A dollar increase in oil prices in India would

increase the import bill by roughly \$1.6 billion (Rs 10,000 crore) on an annual basis.

What could be the optimum level for oil prices in India?

India's oil import bill has been rising over the last few years and is expected to be over US\$ 100 billion during the current financial year.

With the increase in oil prices from 2017 and reaching US\$ 86/ barrel in early October, the import bill of crude for 2018-19 increased; in the budget for 2018-19, the assumption for oil price was US\$ 57.50 per barrel with a provision for subsidy of INR 24,900 crore. Now, when the crude oil price is expected to average around US\$ 68 and Rupee devalued by 16% during this year, the subsidy is expected to touch INR 54,000 during this fiscal.

For India, the ideal price range for oil would be US\$ 40-50/ barrel, as it was during 2015-17. The import bill needs to be in the range of US\$ 60-70 Billion.

However, the oil prices will be determined by production cuts at the meeting of G-20 on November 30 and meeting of OPEC on December 6.

Suggested measures to manage oil demand:

- Diversification of sources for crude: To reduce dependence on oil from Middle East, increase imports from Africa. The imports have already been increased during the month of October, 2018, mainly from Nigeria and Angola. The optimal utilization of the lines of credits by India and successful execution of the projects committed by India against the Lines of Credits or Grants can support Indian industry to have a win-win situation for India and the countries in Africa.
- Barter arrangement: There needs to be serious thinking and strategy on barter system with countries in Africa and Latin America. While G2G may work for such a system, it is a requirement for private companies in the event of devaluation of Rupee. A mixed system of barter and payment in any currency could be evolved.
- Clear policy for EV: Government has to clearly spell out policy for Electric Vehicles with incentives to promote use of EVs.
- Government should strive to meet its renewable energy target of 175 GW.

Legally Speaking

GOVERNMENT POLICY ON INDEPENDENT DIRECTORS

The recent initiation of adjudication process against the Board of Directors of Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services (IL&FS) by NCLT has led the Government of India to take concrete steps to remove the non-performing independent directors from the Company's board. This enabled the government to evaluate independent directors and approaching NCLT to disqualify the independent directors, so identified, for at least 5 years from holding or attending the company's board meetings. This recommendation has emerged from an internal review of the Companies Act done by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs. A press release of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs stated "The scrutiny will mostly be on the basis of financial integrity, absence of convictions or civil liabilities, competence, good reputation, efficiency and character and the detailed guidelines would be worked out later."

Recently, in the case of Amrapali Group of Companies, the Supreme Court has restrained not only the promoters/ Executive Directors but also its Independent Directors from going abroad. The Supreme Court's order gives an impression that the two classes of directors namely the promoter directors and the independent directors are being adjudicated upon on equal footing qua the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

An independent director is a Non-Executive Director who does not have any kind of relationship with the company that may affect his judgment. An independent director should not have been a partner or executive director or an auditor/lawyer/consultants of the company in preceding three years or should not hold 2% or more of shares of the company.

Independent directors act as a guide to the company. Their roles broadly include improving corporate credibility and governance standards functioning as a watchdog and playing a vital role in risk management. Independent Directors play an active role in various committees set up by the Company to ensure good governance.

Independent Directors are those Non-Executive Directors who, apart from receiving Director's remuneration, does not have any material pecuniary relationship or transactions with the Company or its promoters or its directors or its senior management or its holding or subsidiary company. The Non-executive Directors are the custodians of the governance process. They are not involved in its day to day running of business but monitor the executive activity and contribute to the development of the strategy.

The law, as it stands today, provides for the assignment of different rights and liabilities to different classes of directors in a company. Therefore, equating them by imposing same restrictions might set a new trend fastening Independent Directors also with similar liability attached to the whole time directors. The Supreme Court is fastening a type of deemed liability on the whole board for the acts and omission of the whole time directors. The application of strict liability and imposition of accountability for the acts of one class of directors on another will have serious implications on the willingness of persons to join a company as independent director. The Government should consider consulting all stake holders in this regard before taking a final view in the matter.

By Mr. P K Malhotra, Senior Legal Consultant, VJA Legal and Former Law Secretary, Govt. of India

Taxation matters

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

- **Right-to-use minerals including exploration and evaluation is taxable at 5% under reverse charge**

Haryana AAR held that services for right to use minerals including its exploration and evaluation is being taxable at 5%. AAR stated that royalty/ dead rent paid is consideration against transfer of such rights as per lease granted by Govt. to applicant, engaged in business of mining of boulders and extraction of minor minerals. Also, such services of right to use minerals will attract the same rate of tax as on supply of like goods involving transfer of title in goods. Haryana AAR concluded that recipient of service is liable to discharge tax liability under reverse charge basis as per entry no. 5 of Notification No. 13/ 2017 – Central Tax (Rate) and corresponding Notification under Haryana GST Act.

[Pioneer Partners – Haryana AAR] (97 taxmann.com 511)

- **AAR refuses to consider civil structure as plant & machinery structural support; denies input tax credit**

Andhra Pradesh AAR held that GST input tax credit for civil structures in respect of plant and machinery shall not be allowed. AAR states that the civil structures providing structural support to plant and machinery does not fall under the ambit of explanation to proviso to Sec 17(5) of CGST/APGST Act, 2017.

[Maruti Ispat & Energy Pvt. Ltd. – Andhra Pradesh AAR] (99 taxmann.com 103)

- **AAR disallows credits on vehicles used as mobile cotton labs for testing cotton quality**

Andhra Pradesh AAR held that the applicant is ineligible to claim ITC on purchase of vehicles used as mobile cotton labs for purpose of testing quality of cotton. The contention of the applicant was rejected that business is of testing nature and lab (launched on vehicles) is the prime business components, without which there cannot be any supply of service, hence, ITC shall be eligible. Andhra Pradesh AAR clarified that with reference to Section 17(5), the said goods do not fall under the exceptions referred therein, accordingly, the applicant is not entitled to claim of ITC.

[Indian Cotton Solution.com Pvt. Ltd. – Andhra Pradesh AAR]

Income Tax

- **No Section 68 addition if assessee had discharged initial burden cast upon it**

A search in premises of 'B' Group led to survey in premises of assessee. Assessing Officer (AO) completed assessment wherein addition was made to assessee's income under Section 68 of the Act. CIT(A) as well as Tribunal deleted said addition holding that relevant enquiry based upon materials furnished by assessee had not been made by the AO. High Court also found that assessee had discharged onus initially cast upon it by providing basic details which were not suitably enquired into by the AO. Accordingly, High Court upheld the order passed by Tribunal. Considering these facts, Special Leave Petition filed against order of High Court was dismissed by the Apex Court.

[Pr. CIT v. Adamine Construction Pvt. Ltd. – Supreme Court] (99 taxmann.com 45)

- **Section 14A disallowance is to be restricted to the amount of exempt income only**

In course of assessment, AO made addition on account of apportionment of expenses against exempted income under Section 14A. CIT passed a revisional order directing AO to enhance amount of addition under Section 14A. Tribunal set aside revisional order as well as consequent assessment order passed by AO enhancing addition made under Section 14A. High Court upheld the order of Tribunal holding that amount of disallowance under Section 14A has to be restricted to the amount of exempt income only and not a higher figure. SLP filed by Revenue against the above decision of High Court was dismissed by the Supreme Court.

[Pr. CIT v. State Bank of Patiala – Supreme Court] (99 taxmann.com 286)

- **Failure to claim deduction in Income Tax Return (ITR) was not mistake apparent from record; rectification under Section 154 could not be invoked**

The Court was of the view that where assessee itself failed to make a claim for deduction under Section 80-I in its return, same was not a mistake which was apparent from record. The High Court in this case has held that power under Section 154 is exercisable only when the mistake is manifest and could be identified by a mere look, which does not need a long drawn out process of reasoning. The Court, thus, concluded that there was no scope for invoking provisions of Section 154 so as to grant deduction under Section 80-I to the assessee.

[Lakshmi Card Clothing Mfg. Co. Pvt. Ltd. v. DCIT – Madras High Court] (98 taxmann.com 445)

- **Sum received by Sushmita Sen towards damages for being sexually harassed not taxable**

Assessee received a total amount of Rs.145 lakhs in lieu of settlement for breach of terms of celebrity engagement contract. However, only an amount of Rs.50 lakhs was due to assessee under the contractual terms. The balance amount of Rs.95 lakhs was received towards damages arising out of her being sexually harassed by an employee of Coca Cola India Ltd. (CCIL), for having disparaged her professional reputation by false allegations and for the repudiatory breach of contract by CCIL. Tribunal, thus, has held that such compensation could not be termed as any benefit or perquisite arising to assessee out of exercise of profession and hence, it cannot be construed to be assessee's income under Section 2(24) or Section 28 of the Act.

[Sushmita Sen v. ACIT – ITAT Mumbai] (99 taxmann.com 252)

International Taxation

- **Draft assessment order under Section 144C is required even in case of remand proceedings**

High Court in impugned order held that once there is a clear order of setting aside of an assessment order with requirement of Assessing Officer/Transfer Pricing Officer to undertake a fresh exercise for determining the Arm's Length Price (ALP), failure to pass a draft assessment order, would violate Section 144C(1). High Court further held that this is not a curable defect in terms of Section 292B of the Act. Considering the above order of High Court, SLP filed by Revenue against said decision was dismissed by the Apex Court.

[Addl. CIT v. Nokia India Pvt. Ltd. – Supreme Court] [98 taxmann.com 374]

- **SLP dismissed against ruling that adjustment is to be made at average LIBOR rate if assessee extended loan to associated enterprise (AE)**

Assessee had delayed in realizing sale proceeds from AEs and had also extended corporate guarantee and interest free advances to its AEs. These AEs were foreign subsidiaries of assessee. High Court held that where interest free loan was advanced to own foreign subsidiaries and (LIBOR + 2%) was adjusted, assessee would be entitled for benefit of average LIBOR rate existing at that time, i.e., 0.79% and addition of ad hoc 2% was not proper and in that view of the matter, addition of 2% interest in income was required to be quashed and set aside. Special Leave Petition filed by Revenue against said order of High Court was dismissed by the Apex Court.

[CIT v. Vaibhav Gems Ltd. – Supreme Court] (99 taxmann.com 2)

News Roundup

[IFC investments in India up by 136% to over \\$2.6 billion in FY 2018](#) (Business Standard)

International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank group, has invested \$2.6 billion in India in FY18 as compared to \$1.96 billion in 2016-17, a rise of 33 per cent over the last year. IFC said these investments are long-term, and include 40 engagements with partners, ranging from new-age start-ups, such as Coverfox and Bizongo, to established names such as Mahindra & Mahindra and HDFC.

[Strengthen operation of NFRA, recommends Govt-appointed panel](#) (The Hindu Business Line)

Putting its weight behind newly set up NFRA, a Government appointed expert panel has recommended measures to further strengthen the operation of National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA) to address contemporary challenges in relation to auditors, audit firms and networks operating in India.

[India needs 100 million new jobs by 2026 for country's growth](#) (Business Standard)

With a rapidly rising working age population, India would need about 100 million jobs till 2026, a recent PwC study has revealed. Of these, around 80 per cent or 78 million jobs would be needed to be generated in just 10 states.

[CCI working on tool to scrutinise tenders for detecting cartels](#) (The Economic Times)

The Competition Commission is working on a "digital screen-based" system to detect possible cartelisation in public procurement tenders, it is reported.

[SEBI tightens norms for credit rating agencies](#) (The Hindu Business Line)

The capital market regulator on Tuesday, November 13 asked credit rating agencies to analyse the deterioration in the liquidity conditions of the issuer and take into account any asset-liability mismatch while reviewing ratings.

[Policy push for high growth must be across sectors](#) (The Economic Times)

The World Bank in its global report on High-Growth Firms – Facts, Fiction and Policy Options for Emerging Economies has suggested that India reorient its policies in a way that helps companies across sectors achieve high growth rates instead of focussing exclusively on start-ups and hi-tech firms.

[Rupee among top-3 EM currencies in November, thanks to slide in oil prices](#) (The Economic Times)

Sliding crude oil prices have bolstered the rupee, until recently the worst-performing monetary unit in Asia, and helped revive overseas interest in Indian equity and debt assets.

[FPIs' bullish stance continues; inflow at Rs 6,310 crore in November so far](#) (The Economic Times)

Foreign investors have pumped in Rs 6,310 crore into Indian capital markets this month so far, after pulling out massive funds in October, on easing crude oil prices and a strengthening rupee.

[Morgan Stanley upgrades EMs, most positive on India, Indonesia](#) (The Economic Times)

Morgan Stanley is most positive on India and Indonesia among Asian markets outside Japan. The brokerage has said domestic demand stories will take centre stage because of easing external funding conditions, moderating global growth, elections and policy measures.

[New I-T draft by Feb 28; Finance Ministry names task force head to write direct tax code](#) (Financial Express)

Ahead of the interim Budget and general elections early next year, finance ministry has said the task force to draft a new direct tax law to replace the existing Income Tax Act will submit its report by February 28.

[India and China sign protocol to amend DTAA](#) (The Hindu Business Line)

India and China on Monday, November 26 signed a protocol to amend the existing Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) between the two countries.

[India among top choice in emerging retail markets in APAC region \(The Hindu Business Line\)](#)

Due to growing consumer demand, quality retail real estate development and stable economic and political environment, the retail real estate sector is witnessing growing investments by private equity funds and institutional investors, according to CBRE, the report titled 'India Retail 2.0 and the way forward'.

Aviation

[India to become 3rd-largest aviation market by 2024, surpass the UK \(Business Standard\)](#)

India will become the world's third largest aviation market around 2024 surpassing the UK, global airlines' body IATA said on Wednesday as it projected total air passenger numbers to touch 8.2 billion in 2037.

Banking & Finance

[Sunil Mehta panel forms 'Sashakt India AMC' for resolving large NPAs \(Business Standard\)](#)

Sunil Mehta, the chairman of a bankers' panel working on a faster resolution of stressed assets in public sector banks, Thursday, November 15 said an asset management company (AMC) for resolving large bad loans has been formed and will be called as Sashakt India Asset Management.

[GST collection: Couple of highs, but way short of Rs 12 trillion target \(Business Standard\)](#)

The collections from goods and services tax (GST) was projected to be Rs 12 trillion in the current financial year. In other words, each month is expected to yield Rs 1 trillion from GST on an average. However, only two months — April and October — have so far hit the monthly target.

Energy

[Power sector to attract Rs 11.56 trillion investments in five years \(Business Standard\)](#)

The country's power sector is poised to attract investments worth Rs 11.56 trillion between 2017 and 2022 according to a report by the Indian Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF). Investments are expected to flow into thermal, hydro, nuclear and renewables segments.

[Manufacturing-linked solar guidelines eased \(Financial Express\)](#)

After repeatedly postponing the last date for receiving bids for the 10 gigawatt (GW) manufacturing-linked solar scheme, the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) has eased the norms for potential firms. Under the amendments, solar companies would now get 36 months, instead of the 30-month period mandated earlier, for setting up manufacturing units.

Infrastructure

[India will need USD 4.5 trillion till 2040 for infra development \(The Economic Times\)](#)

India will need around USD 4.5 trillion till 2040 for development of infrastructure sector in the country, according to NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant there is an urgent need to restructure entire existing public private partnership (PPP) framework as there are delays in completion of infrastructure projects due to disputes.

Start-ups

[Over 1,200 tech start-ups added, \\$4.3 billion funding received in 2018 \(Financial Express\)](#)

The start-up landscape in the country is buzzing with action. There has been an addition of over 1,200 start-ups this year, taking the total number of tech start-ups to 7,200-7,700. Investment into start-ups have increased by over 100%, from \$2.0 billion in 2017 to \$4.2 billion in 2018.

Telecom

[Telecom department amends unified licence norms for operators & VNOs \(Financial Express\)](#)

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has amended the Unified Licence (UL) norms for telecom operators and virtual network operators (VNOs) to include the regulatory framework for application of net neutrality principles.

[Indian OTT market expected to reach \\$5 billion by 2023 \(Financial Express\)](#)

Improving connectivity coupled with affordable data prices, rising smartphone penetration, favourable shift in demographics, leading to the rise of 'affluent and elite', and building up of supply content is expected to boost the size of the country's over-the-top market to \$5 billion by 2023, according to Boston Consulting Group report.

[India biggest commitment for AIIB \(The Economic Times\)](#)

India is the biggest commitment country for the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) which is interested in funding rural roads and transmission lines projects in the country, a top official of the Beijing-based multilateral development bank has said. The multilateral bank's focus in India is expected to be on development of rural roads, transmission lines and green projects among others.

[India, 44 WTO members object to penalty plan for not notifying sops \(The Economic Times\)](#)

India, South Africa and 43 countries of the African Group have raised concerns at a proposal by the US, the EU and Japan that requires member countries to increase their funding to the World Trade Organization (WTO) if they introduce or increase subsidies for domestic industry without reporting to the organization.

[RCEP pact put off till next year \(The Hindu Business Line\)](#)

Trade Ministers from the 16-member countries negotiating the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement, including India, has decided to push the year-end target for a "substantial conclusion" of the talks by a year due to differences on key issues.

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