

Business News Update

17 June 2025

**“Courage is not the absence of fear
but the strength to overcome it.”**

Merchandise trade deficit narrows to \$21.88 billion in May, shows data

India's merchandise trade deficit narrowed to \$21.88 billion in May 2025, down from \$26.42 billion in April and \$22.09 billion in May 2024, according to provisional data released by the Commerce Ministry. Merchandise exports stood at \$38.73 billion in May 2025, registering a 2.2 per cent decline from \$39.59 billion in May 2024. Imports contracted by 1.76 per cent to \$60.61 billion, compared to \$61.68 billion year-on-year (y-o-y). In April, the trade deficit had widened to a five-month high of \$26.42 billion, driven by a spike in imports, despite a modest rise in exports. April–May trade up 5.75 per cent; electronics, pharma lead. The cumulative trade for April–May 2025 grew 5.75 per cent over the same period last year. Non-petroleum merchandise exports rose 7.5 per cent y-o-y in the two-month window. Electronic goods exports posted strong growth at 54 per cent in May. Other performing sectors included pharmaceuticals, marine products, and textiles. However, exports of petroleum products, gems and jewellery, and cotton yarn saw notable declines.

Source: [Business Standard, June 16, 2025](#)

India's WPI inflation dips to 0.39% in May, lowest level in 14 months

India's wholesale price index (WPI)-based inflation dropped to a 14-month low of 0.39 per cent in May 2025, down from 0.85 per cent recorded in April, according to official data released on Monday. The decline was driven by easing prices across key categories, including food, fuel, and primary articles. "Positive rate of inflation in May 2025 is primarily due to increase in prices of manufacture of food products, electricity, other manufacturing, chemicals and chemical products, manufacture of other transport equipment and non-food articles, etc," the industry ministry said in a statement. The inflation rate for primary articles declined to -2.02 per cent in May from -1.44 per cent in April, while the WPI core inflation (which excludes food and fuel) eased to 0.9 per cent from 1.5 per cent a month earlier. WPI food inflation in May cooled to 1.72 per cent, compared to 2.55 per cent in April, reflecting a moderation in wholesale food prices.

Source: [Business Standard, June 16, 2025](#)

Russian oil freight rates to India ease, EU curbs may reverse trend

IFreight rates for Russian oil shipments from the Baltic ports to India eased further in the period from late May to early June, thanks to high tanker availability, but the trend may reverse if Europe's proposed lower price cap comes to fruition. The European Union has put forward a new sanction package against Russia over Ukraine and proposed to lower the Group of Seven nations' price cap on Russian crude oil to \$45 a barrel from \$60 a barrel. The G7 countries and the EU, imposed the \$60 cap on Russian oil in late 2022, restricting access to Western shipping and insurance services for above-cap purchases in a bid to curb Moscow's revenues. However, as the price of Russia's flagship Urals crude has fallen below the cap, Western shipowners have been able to return to its oil market. Urals crude price estimates in Russia's ports have stabilised below \$60 per barrel since early April, allowing more Western shipping companies, primarily Greek, to resume shipping services, increasing tanker availability and putting freight rates under pressure.

Source: [Business Standard, June 16, 2025](#)

Amazon, Google, Tesla among top 25 OPT hirers in US; Indians lead STEM list

More international students in the US were hired through the Optional Practical Training (OPT) programme in 2024 than ever before — and Amazon, Google and Microsoft emerged as the top recruiters, according to the latest Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) data released by the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Under OPT, foreign students on an F-1 visa are allowed to work in the US in a role related to their field of study, either during their course or after graduation. Those with degrees in science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) can also apply for a two-year STEM OPT extension. According to DHS, 194,554 foreign students received OPT work authorisation in 2024, up from 160,627 in 2023 — a 21.1% increase and the fourth consecutive year of growth.

Source: [Business Standard, June 16, 2025](#)

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G7 summit opens in Canada with focus on trade, wars — and not riling Trump

There is no plan for a joint statement this year from the G7, a sign that the Trump administration sees no need to build a shared consensus with fellow democracies if it views such a statement as contrary to its goals of new tariffs, more fossil fuel production and a Europe that is less dependent on the US military. G7 summit sets off with focus on keys issues surrounding global trade amidst recent disruptions such as the Iran-Israel conflict and Trump's liberation day tariffs. When US President Donald Trump last came to Canada for a Group of Seven summit, the enduring image was of him seated with his arms folded defiantly as then-German Chancellor Angela Merkel stared daggers at him. If there is a shared mission at this year's G7 summit, which begins Monday in Canada's Rocky Mountains, it is a desire to minimize any fireworks at a moment of combustible tensions.

Source: [Financial Express, June 16, 2025](#)

Trump's 2024 earnings revealed – How crypto and media fueled President's wealth

US President Donald Trump's latest financial disclosure reveals that cryptocurrency has emerged as the dominant force behind his personal wealth, now estimated at \$5.5 billion. The annual filing, made public on Friday, highlights that \$3.3 billion of this fortune stems directly from blockchain-based investments, marking a dramatic pivot from traditional income streams. Crypto at the core of Trump's financial empire. Trump, who returned to office in January 2025, first entered the crypto market in 2022. His endorsement of the \$TRUMP memecoin, launched just days before his second campaign announcement, generated an estimated \$315 million in fees alone. As of this year, Trump also holds \$430 million worth of tokens across various digital wallets. In total, over 60 per cent of President Trump's net worth now originates from crypto assets, a staggering shift for a leader once skeptical of digital currencies.

Source: [Financial Express, June 16, 2025](#)

India may 'facilitate' magnet relief for auto cos as China keeps rare earth keys

The Indian government is intervening to help its auto industry secure rare earth magnets from China, as delays in approvals threaten manufacturing schedules. Companies have submitted end-user certificates, and industry representatives will visit China with government support to expedite the process. The situation is complicated by tense India-China relations, with potential production disruptions looming if approvals are not granted soon. The Indian government has stepped in to support efforts by the domestic auto and component industries to secure rare earth magnets from China, amid rising concern that delays in approvals could disrupt manufacturing schedules in the coming weeks. Companies have submitted End User Certificates (EUCs) to Beijing, certifying that the magnets will not be diverted to defence or weapons production, Times of India reported.

Source: [Economic Times, June 16, 2025](#)

China's factory output grew slower than expected, but consumption offers bright spot

China's factory output growth slowed to 5.8 percent in May, falling short of expectations due to ongoing trade war pressures, despite a temporary truce with the United States. However, retail sales offered a positive sign, surging 6.4 percent year-on-year, exceeding forecasts and indicating a potential boost from government initiatives. The nation faces challenges in domestic demand and property sector debt. Growth in China's factory output hit a six-month low last month as trade war pressures bit, official data showed Monday, while a bump in a key gauge of domestic consumption offered a rare bright spot for the economy. The United States and China this month agreed to a temporary truce in a standoff that saw tariffs hiked to eye-watering levels and upended global supply chains. But the impact of the row was highlighted by official figures showing industrial production rose just 5.8 percent last month, below the 6.0 percent predicted in a Bloomberg survey and its slowest pace since November.

Source: [Economic times, June 16, 2025](#)