

19 March 2025

Business News Update

“You have to dream before your dreams can come true.”

Domestic steel prices rise but looming global trade war sparks concerns

Domestic steel prices have risen over the past couple of months in anticipation of a safeguard duty. However, a looming global trade war is likely to pose risks as import threats increase and export prospects weaken. Data from BigMint showed that in March 2025, hot rolled coil (HRC) prices ex-Mumbai increased by Rs 600 per tonne month-on-month (m-o-m), rising from Rs 48,400 per tonne in February to Rs 49,000 per tonne. The monthly average for January was Rs 47,000 per tonne. However, on a year-on-year (Y-o-Y) basis, HRC prices, a benchmark for flat steel, have consistently remained lower compared to FY24. In long steel, rebar prices showed variability, with FY25 prices being higher in some months and lower in others compared to FY24. According to BigMint, March 2025 saw a price increase of Rs 1,600 per tonne m-o-m, bringing the price to Rs 54,400 per tonne from Rs 52,800 per tonne in February.

Source: [Business Standard, March 18, 2025](#)

Believe in 'Make in India', it is giving good results: FM to Opposition in RS

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday commended the Make in India initiative of the government, saying it has given great momentum to manufacturing. Addressing the Parliament Budget Session in Rajya Sabha, the Finance Minister said that the initiative is giving good results. “Make In India has not failed, but given great momentum to manufacturing,” Sitharaman said in rebuff to Opposition’s criticism in the Upper House. Talking about the economy, she said India's household debt-to-GDP ratio is relatively low compared to emerging market economies and some advanced nations. "India's assets and liability figures much better than many emerging market economies, and some developed nations," she further said. “We are committed to bringing normalcy, and prosperity in Manipur. Modi government has greater sensitivity and care for Manipur and other states. Manipur is a sensitive issue, we all have to support one-another,” she said.

Source: [Business Standard, March 18, 2025](#)

Kalyani Powertrain, Compal partner to make 'X86 platform' servers in India

Kalyani Powertrain, an arm of Bharat Forge, on Thursday said it has entered into a technology licensing agreement with Taiwan's Compal Electronics Inc for manufacturing of 'X86 platform' servers in India. The two parties have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to develop server business using locally manufactured solutions in India. Compal will provide Kalyani Powertrain Ltd (KPTL) technological support related to servers, including overseeing local production, assembly, testing activities, and final sales, the company said in a statement. "This association will give a strong impetus to India's manufacturing competitiveness. We are ecstatic and encouraged by the trust they have reposed on the Kalyani group for the proposed association," Bharat Forge Vice Chairman and Joint MD Amit Kalyani said. Compal CEO Tony Bonadero said Kalyani Powertrain's extensive experience in the Indian market will create synergistic effects in the collaboration.

Source: [Business Standard, March 18, 2025](#)

RBI, Bank of Mauritius sign pact to use local currencies in bilateral trade

Reserve Bank and the Bank of Mauritius (BOM) have signed a pact for establishing a framework to promote the use of the Indian Rupee and the Mauritian Rupee (MUR) for cross-border transactions. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra and BOM Governor Rama Krishna Sithanen G C S K, the central bank said in a statement on Tuesday. "The MoU documents were exchanged in Port Louis, Mauritius in the presence of the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi and Prime Minister of Mauritius Navinchandra Ramgoolam, on Wednesday, March 12, 2025," it said. The RBI said the MoU aims to promote the use of INR and MUR in bilateral trade. The MoU covers all current account transactions and permissible capital account transactions as agreed upon by both the countries. The framework would enable exporters and importers to invoice and pay in their respective domestic currencies, which in turn, would enable the development of a market in the INR-MUR pair.

Source: [Business Standard, March 18, 2025](#)

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BofA Corp survey shows biggest-ever drop in exposure to US equities

Investors slashed exposure to US equities by the most on record in recent weeks as expectations of global economic growth worsened, according to Bank of America Corp. Fund managers' allocation to US stocks sank to about 23 per cent underweight, the lowest since June 2023. A net 44 per cent of respondents in the survey conducted in March said they expected global growth to deteriorate, rising sharply from the previous month. "Pessimism on global growth outlook is bad news for stocks," strategist Michael Hartnett wrote in a note. Global investors are hunting for opportunities elsewhere after US stocks tipped into a correction earlier this month. Chinese tech stocks are in hot demand and Europe has also benefited due to a brighter regional economic outlook. The strategist last week recommended buying the S&P 500 at 5,300 points — about 7 per cent lower than current levels. The index has recovered after sinking as low as 5,504 as investors worried about the impact from President Donald Trump's trade war.

Source: [Business Standard, March 18, 2025](#)

India's consumption pivot to hurt smaller stocks, says Bank of America

India's small and mid-cap stocks are likely to decline for the first time in three years in 2025 as the government scales back spending in favor of tax breaks to boost consumption, according to a Bank of America Corp. strategist. This segment, dominated by infrastructure-related firms, beat the broader stock market handily in the past two years. The rally has already started to fizzle as Prime Minister Narendra Modi's administration shifts its focus from investment-driven growth to reviving domestic demand. "The government's policies have seemingly moved toward balancing capex and consumption versus being primarily focused on capex earlier," the bank's India research head Amish Shah said in an interview Tuesday. "The capex cycle has reversed and a moderating growth would impact many sectors and stocks linked to this theme."

Source: [Business Standard, March 18, 2025](#)

Xi Jinping may visit US soon, says Trump as trade war heats up

US President Donald Trump hinted on Monday that Chinese President Xi Jinping may visit the United States "in the not too distant future" as tensions between the two economic superpowers continue to be high. Trump made this statement during a board meeting at the John F. Kennedy Performing Arts Centre in Washington but did not share further details regarding the meeting. The White House has yet to comment on the chances of Xi's visit, while the Chinese embassy in Washington has also not given any clarification, according to a Reuters report. After taking office, Trump implemented 20% tariffs on all Chinese imports, blaming Beijing for not being able to stop the flow of chemicals that are utilised in producing illegal fentanyl which is also the major reason for drug overdose deaths in the US. He also stated that tariffs are needed to "rebalance" trade partnerships and create revenue for the US government. Meanwhile, China has firmly opposed the tariffs and asserted that it has taken serious action to handle narcotics trafficking. In a counter-attack, Beijing has also announced a limited set of retaliatory tariffs. Despite the ongoing tension, Trump has recently expressed hopefulness about his personal relationship with Xi.

Source: [Financial Express, March 18, 2025](#)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi joins Donald Trump-owned social media platform Truth Social

Prime Minister Narendra Modi joined Truth Social, a social media platform owned by Trump Media and Technology Group on Monday. Posting on the platform for the first time, Modi wrote, "Delighted to be on Truth Social! Looking forward to interacting with all the passionate voices here and engaging in meaningful conversations in the times to come." PM Modi joined Truth Social when President Trump himself shared the link to PM Modi's historic podcast with Lex Fridman. Shortly after joining the platform, the Prime Minister followed two individuals: US President Donald Trump and Vice President JD Vance. In his second post, just minutes after the first, PM Modi quoted a Truth post from Trump, where the President had shared his podcast featuring an American AI researcher, and expressed his gratitude.

Source: [Financial Express, March 18, 2025](#)
