

Daily Economic News Summary: 14 November 2017

1. Next step in GST recast: Lower end of tax slabs

Source: The Economic Times ([Link](#))

The next rejig of Goods and Services Tax (GST) will likely focus on the lower end of the rate slabs, as the country seeks to further streamline the structure by converging multiple rates into two or three. It will happen after the regime settles down and there is more clarity on revenue following the recast last week. Simplification of laws, rules and procedures in line with industry's feedback is also likely to top the GST Council's agenda in the next few meetings.

2. Post tax rate cut, FMCG firms set to reduce prices

The Economic Times ([Link](#))

Prices of shampoo, chocolates, nutrition drinks and condensed milk are set to drop 5-15% after the GST Council eased these from higher tax slabs. Companies such as Hindustan Unilever, Dabur, Amul, GlaxoSmithKline, Procter & Gamble, Nestle and Perfetti Van Melle said they have either decided to reduce prices or are planning to do so after the GST Council cut tax on several consumer goods to 18% from 28%. They in fact, are also bound by the anti-profiteering clause under the GST law to pass on any benefit from lower tax incidence to consumers.

3. BJP governments' 2019 target: Delhi to Patna by road in 11 hours flat

Source: The Economic Times ([Link](#))

Delhi to Patna - 1,100 kilometres by road in 11 hours flat. This is the target being set by the BJP governments at the Centre and in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, which are getting together to help slash travel time by at least a third between the three major political centres of Delhi, Lucknow and

Patna by 2019, when the next general election is due. The plan envisages a network of ring roads and expressways, and creating a new economic corridor on the lines of the Delhi-Mumbai industrial corridor.

4. India, Canada seek to put free trade pact in fast lane

Source: The Economic Times ([Link](#))

India and Canada will make efforts for expeditious conclusion of a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement on goods and services at the annual ministerial dialogue starting here on 13.11.2017, said an official statement. A high-level delegation led by the Canadian International Trade Minister Francois-Philippe Champagne is visiting India to attend the 4th Annual Ministerial Dialogue (AMD). The Indian delegation will be led by Commerce and Industry Minister Suresh Prabhu

5. Agri-focused Swiss fund Pioneering Ventures to invest Rs 5000 crore

Source: The Economic Times ([Link](#))

Swiss-based Indian agriculture sector-focused accelerator fund Pioneering Ventures plans to deploy Rs 5,000 crore in the agriculture and food supply chain space in the country over the next five years and reach out to 1 million farmers. "So far we've deployed close to Rs 1,000 crore in India in many ventures. Over the next five years, we expect this to jump five-fold to Rs 5,000 crore. We are focusing on agriculture and food supply chains and sub-supply chains," its partner Pablo Erat told here over the weekend. Over the past decade, the fund has launched four companies in the country -- Desai Fruits & Vegetables, Citrus International, FarmLink and MilkLane -- deploying close to Rs 1,000 crore in alliance with institutional investors and high networth individuals.

6. Piramal Finance sanctions Rs400 crore loan to Advance India Projects

Source: The Live Mint ([Link](#))

Piramal Finance Ltd has sanctioned a Rs400 crore loan to Gurugram-based Advance India Projects Ltd (AIPL), primarily for construction finance. AIPL has five projects under construction including AIPL Joy Central, a four-acre, mixed-use development in Gurugram comprising commercial and retail development along with a multiplex. In the National Capital Region, where the residential market has seen a prolonged slump, investors are keen to put their money in under-construction office projects, which are performing better than home sales.

7. In Q2, India Inc shrugs off GST impact

Source: The Hindu Businessline ([Link](#))

After its muted performance in the June quarter due to the transition to GST, India Inc is getting back to form, going by the September quarter results of 700-odd companies. Net profit (adjusted) for these companies grew 13.45 per cent in the three months ended September 2017, over the September 2016 quarter (year-on-year). The disruptions caused in the run-up to GST resulted in only 1.08 per cent year-on-year growth in net profit for these companies in the June 2017 quarter. Restocking of inventory post GST as well as the onset of the festival season helped consumer-oriented sectors such as apparel, durables, auto, gems and jewellery deliver much higher profit growth than in the previous quarter.

8. India, Australia, Japan and US hold talks on Indo-Pacific cooperation

Source: The Hindu Businessline ([Link](#))

Officials from India, the US, Japan, and Australia on Sunday held extensive talks here to pursue common interests in the strategically important Indo-Pacific region where China has been aggressively expanding its military presence. In the meeting, seen as the first major move in formation of the quadrilateral security dialogue — or ‘quad’, the officials deliberated on evolving security scenario in the Indo-Pacific region besides delving into effectively combating threat of terrorism and other security challenges. In a statement, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said consultations were held on issues of common interest in the Indo-Pacific region with a focus on cooperation based on converging vision and values for promotion of peace, stability and prosperity in the area.