

*(This document comprises news clips from various media in which Balmer Lawrie is mentioned, news related to GOI and PSEs, and news from the verticals that we do business in. This will be uploaded on intranet and website every Monday.)*

## **Q2 GDP growth at 8.4%, govt sees double-digit rise in FY22**

The country's economy grew by 8.4% in the July-September quarter, broadly in line with expectations, led by a steady farm sector and double-digit expansion in public administration, defence and other services as the impact of the base effect waned and weighed on the overall numbers. Data released by the National Statistical Office on Tuesday showed the economy grew an annual 8.4% in the three months to September, slower than the 20.1% expansion recorded in the previous quarter but above the 7.4% contraction in the second quarter of the previous year. The Indian economy has recovered swiftly after the bruising impact of the lockdown in the first quarter of 2020-21, when it contracted a record 24.4%. Chief economic adviser Krishnamurthy Subramanian said the economy was likely to have double-digit growth in 2021-22, 6.5% next year and above 7% thereafter. While some economists said the disaggregated data for the September quarter was far from convincing, the government asserted that the economic recovery has continued robustly in the second quarter and the base effect does not make it less noteworthy.

*The Times of India - 01.12.2021*

<https://epaper.timesgroup.com/olive/odn/timesofindia/shared/ShowArticle.aspx?doc=TOIKM%2F2021%2F12%2F01&entity=Ar00508&sk=5D032AC3&mode=text>

## **India's fiscal deficit for April-October at 36.3% of FY22 target**

The Union government's fiscal deficit for the April-October period came in at Rs 5.47 trillion or 36.3 per cent of the Budget estimates. In the corresponding period last year, the country's fiscal deficit was a high 119.7 per cent. In the pre-pandemic period (April-October 2019-20), the fiscal deficit was 102.4 per cent of the Budget numbers. The deficit stood at 6.4 per cent of GDP during the first half of the current fiscal year, a bit lower than the full year target of 6.8 per cent. The data released by the Controller General Accounts for the April-October period showed that the reduced fiscal deficit had come on the back of a

## **Eco to grow at double-digit rate in current fiscal: Finmin**

The finance ministry on Tuesday said that the Indian economy is poised to grow at a double-digit rate during the current financial year and projected an expansion by 6.5-7% during 2022-23. Chief economic adviser Krishnamurthy Subramanian said that the structural reforms initiated by the government during the last few months will not just help ensure a growth of around 7% over the next few years but also keep a check on inflation as supply side issues have been tackled. "India is likely to have double-digit growth this year. The overall growth for the first half has been 13.7%, so even a little more than 6% growth in the subsequent quarters should be able to deliver double-digit growth for this year," he told reporters. The economist, who has decided to head back to academics after a three-year stint in North Block, also said the Modi government's decision to reverse the amendments to three farm laws will not be a major setback to the overall process. "In a democracy like ours, political economy matters a lot and I think it is a fact that the way agriculture generates emotion other sectors do not.

*The Times of India - 01.12.2021*

<https://epaper.timesgroup.com/olive/odn/timesofindia/shared/ShowArticle.aspx?doc=TOIKM%2F2021%2F12%2F01&entity=Ar02004&sk=1729AD07&mode=text>

## **Mfg activity rise at 10-mth high in Nov**

Activity in the country's manufacturing sector rose at its fastest pace in 10 months on the back of rising new orders, led by robust domestic demand and strong increase in production & sales, highlighting a swift recovery in the key industrial sector. This augurs well for overall economic growth, a survey showed on Wednesday. Increasing from 55.9 in October to 57.6 in November, the IHS Markit India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) signalled the strongest improvement in health of the sector in 10 months. Moreover, the headline figure was well above its long-run average of 53.6. The 50-point mark separates

phenomenal rise in revenue receipts and a fall in both capital and revenue expenditures. While revenue expenditures as a proportion of the Budget estimates are lower by 5.7 percentage points than the pre-pandemic level, capital expenditures are down 13.8 percentage points. In 2019-20, the government had spent 59.5 per cent of its budgeted capital expenditure by October. This year, it has only spent less than half allocated to capital expenditure (45.7 per cent). On the revenue side, the government had collected Rs 12.8 trillion, of which Rs 12.6 trillion accrued from net tax revenue, and the rest was part of the non-debt capital receipts.

*Business Standard - 01.12.2021*

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-s-fiscal-deficit-for-april-october-at-36-3-of-fy22-target-121120100050\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-s-fiscal-deficit-for-april-october-at-36-3-of-fy22-target-121120100050_1.html)

### **Services sector keeps buzzing, virus woes weigh**

India's services activity remained elevated in November, recording a marginal drop from the previous month, after registering the strongest growth in more than a decade in October. Data released by IHS Markit on Friday showed Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) for services eased to 58.1 in November from 58.4 in October. A reading above 50 indicates expansion in economic activity. "PMI data for November indicated the Indian service sector continued to strengthen, with a substantial upturn in new orders underpinning output growth. According to monitored companies, the upturn reflected sustained increases in new work and ongoing improvements in market conditions," the data analytics company said. Earlier this week, IHS Markit released data showing India's manufacturing PMI hit a 10-month high in November as companies scaled up input buying. However, travel restrictions by many countries due to the spread of the Omicron variant may hit services activity in the coming months.

*Mint - 04.12.2021*

<https://www.livemint.com/economy/india-services-pmi-remains-elevated-in-november-but-omicron-concerns-prevail-11638510057086.html>

### **Strategic sale planned for 22 PSUs, 17 ongoing**

The government is pursuing strategic sale in 22 firms of which 17 are ongoing transactions including BPCL, Shipping Corporation of India, Concor and BEML. In a written reply in Lok Sabha, minister of state for finance Bhagwat Karad said that since 2016 government had given in-principle nod for strategic disinvestment of 35 central public

expansion from contraction. Manufacturers said strengthening demand, improving market conditions and successful marketing boosted sales in November. Factory orders rose for the fifth month in a row and at a sharp pace — the fastest since February. The survey is compiled from responses to questionnaires sent to purchasing managers in a panel of about 400 manufacturers.

*The Times of India - 02.12.2021*

<https://epaper.timesgroup.com/olive/odn/timeofindia/shared/ShowArticle.aspx?doc=TOIKM%2F2021%2F12%2F02&entity=Ar01509&sk=B4F76868&mode=text>

### **Central capex seen jumping 12% over pre-pandemic level**

Indicating durable recovery to the pre-pandemic levels, the public Capex cycle has turned the corner with the Central and states capital expenditure nearly crossing FY20 levels, growing faster than the gross domestic product rate, according to a report. While the Central Capex has already crossed the pre-pandemic trendline, states too should do so if the budgetary targets are met, which implies that the pandemic did not cause a major permanent loss in the government Capex in terms of trend, said a Crisil report released on Thursday. If the budgetary targets for Capex are met by both the Centre and states this fiscal, the pre-pandemic decadal trend for the overall Capex will be revisited, Crisil said, adding despite a tight fiscal position, the Central Capex grew 31 per cent over the last fiscal and if the trend is maintained, it is set to overshoot by 12 per cent pre-pandemic trend level, and for the states it expects them to meet 80-85 per cent of their Capex target.

*Millennium Post - 03.12.2021*

<http://www.millenniumpost.in/business/central-capex-seen-jumping-12-over-pre-pandemic-level-460601>

### **Govt plans 4 more strategic selloff deals by March-end**

Having finalised two strategic privatisation deals in as many months, the government is looking to clinch at least four more transactions by the end of March — Shipping Corporation of India, BEML, Pawan Hans and Neelachal Ispat, a senior government official has said. "We are working on several transactions and we are

sector enterprises or CPSEs. "New Public Sector Enterprise (PSE) Policy for AtmaNirbhar Bharat notified on 4th February, 2021, has provided outline of the process for deciding strategic sale or closure of PSEs on a case-to-case basis," Karad said adding that since 2016, the government has given 'in-principle' nod for strategic disinvestment of 35 CPSEs or subsidiaries, joint ventures of CPSEs. According to the finance ministry, there are 17 ongoing transactions being processed by Department of Investment and Public Asset Management or DIPAM which include Project & Development India Limited, Engineering Project (India) Limited, Central Electronics Limited, BEML Limited, Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (except Numaligarh Refinery Limited), Container Corporation of India Limited and Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd.

*The Economic Times - 30.11.2021*

<https://epaper.timesgroup.com/olive/odn/theconomictimes/shared/ShowArticle.aspx?doc=ETKM%2F2021%2F11%2F30&entity=Ar01109&sk=05387557&mode=text>

### **Four CPSEs pay Rs 5,155 crore dividend to govt**

The government has received Rs 5,155 crore as dividend tranches from four CPSEs, DIPAM Secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey said on Monday. "Government has respectively received about Rs 4,180 crore and Rs 575 crore from ONGC and BPCL as dividend tranches," Pandey tweeted. The government has respectively received about Rs 240 crore and Rs 160 crore from SPMCIL and ECGC as dividend tranches, he said in another tweet. The dividend from these four CPSEs add up to Rs 5,155 crore. With this, so far this fiscal Rs 25,376.75 crore has been obtained through dividends from various CPSEs, as per the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) website.

*Moneycontrol - 30.11.2021*

<https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/business/economy/four-cpses-pay-rs-5155-crore-dividend-to-govt-7772961.html>

### **Govt's excise mop-up from petrol, diesel doubles to Rs 3.7 lakh crore in FY21; states get Rs 20,000 crore**

The central government's mop-up from excise duty levied on petrol and diesel more than doubled to Rs. 3.72 lakh crore in the pandemic year 2020-21, out of which states were given less than Rs

hoping to conclude this by the end of the year," Tuhin Kanta Pandey, secretary in the department of investment public asset management (Dipam), told TOI after the government announced the sale of state-run Central Electronics (CEL). While oil marketing company BPCL is a major company on the sell-off list, its privatisation is expected to spill over into next fiscal year, along with sale of IDBI Bank and a general insurer. The government has also announced the privatisation of two nationalised banks, which are likely to be Indian Overseas Bank and Central Bank of India, for which it needs to move legislative amendments. After a slow start to the privatisation programme, the Modi government announced the sale of loss-making Air India earlier this year and followed it up with CEL this week.

*The Times of India - 02.12.2021*

<https://epaper.timesgroup.com/olive/odn/timeofindia/shared/ShowArticle.aspx?doc=TOIKM%2F2021%2F12%2F02&entity=Ar01504&sk=CF088A17&mode=text>

### **CAG: Only 21% of cess on crude oil utilised for intended purpose in 5 yrs**

Flagging concerns that cess proceeds collected by the Centre is not being fully utilised for the identified purpose, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) said only Rs 15,506 crore or 21% of the total receipt of Rs 72,484 crore from cess on crude oil have been spent for development of oil industry during FY16-FY20. Oil Industry (Development) Act, 1974 provides for establishment of Oil Industry Development Board (OIDB) for the development of Oil Industry and for that purpose levy a duty of excise on crude oil and natural gas as a cess. CAG audit scrutiny for the period FY10 to FY20, showed that no funds from cess proceeds have been transferred to OIDB as against the total cess collection of Rs 1,28,461 crore. It is also significant that since inception of OIDB only Rs 902 crore had been transferred to the body and since FY92, no funds out of the cess collected by the government were transferred to OIDB.

*The Financial Express - 30.11.2021*

<https://www.financialexpress.com/economy/cag-only-21-of-cess-on-crude-oil-utilised-for-intended-purpose-in-5-yrs/2378717/>

### **Global jet fuel demand under pressure from Omicron, border curbs**

Global jet fuel markets stayed under pressure on Tuesday as more countries expanded border restrictions to keep the new Omicron Coronavirus variant at bay, prompting travellers to reconsider their plans. Jet fuel demand - the

20,000 crore, according to a reply by the government in the Rajya Sabha on Tuesday. Minister of state for finance Pankaj Chaudhary in a written reply to a question stated that collection from levy of central excise duty on petrol and diesel increased from Rs 1.78 lakh crore in 2019-20 to Rs 3.72 lakh crore in 2020-21 (April 2020 to March 2021). The increase in the collection was mainly on account of rise in the incidence taxation on fuels. Total excise duty on petrol was Rs 19.98 per litre in 2019 and Rs 15.83 a litre on diesel. The government raised excise duty twice last year to Rs 32.98 per litre on petrol and to Rs 31.83 on diesel. The duty was moderated to Rs 32.90 a litre on petrol and Rs 31.80 on diesel in the budget this year. And it was cut by Rs 5 a litre on petrol and Rs 10 per litre on diesel this month after retail prices jumped to record high across the country.

*The Economic Times - 02.12.2021*

<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/govts-excise-mop-up-from-petrol-diesel-doubles-to-rs-3-7-lakh-crore-in-fy21-states-get-rs-20000-crore/88004576>

### **Saudis Raise Oil Prices for Asia, U.S. Despite Omicron's Spread**

Saudi Arabia raised oil prices for buyers in Asia and the U.S., signalling it sees demand staying strong despite the spread of the omicron variant of the coronavirus. The move comes days after the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and its allies - a 23-nation group led by Saudi Arabia and Russia -- surprised traders with a decision to boost crude output. Saudi Aramco increased January's prices for all crude grades that will be shipped to Asia and to the U.S., according to a statement from the state producer. The company raised its key Arab Light grade for customers in Asia by 60 cents from December to \$3.30 a barrel above a benchmark. That's the most expensive it's been since February 2020, around when the pandemic first struck. Prices for the U.S. will go up by between 40 and 60 cents. Those for Europe, a relatively small market for Aramco, will be cut.

*Bloomberg - 05.12.2021*

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-12-05/saudi-arabia-raises-oil-prices-for-asian-and-u-s-customers>

biggest laggard in the oil complex - had been forecast to post the strongest growth of 550,000 barrels per day to 5.9 million bpd in fourth quarter, according to the International Energy Agency in its November 16 report. But now Omicron pose the greatest risk to jet fuel consumption. Hong Kong expanded a ban on entry for non-residents from several countries, the latest to expand travel curbs after Israel and Japan have already announced border closures to all foreign travellers. Britain and Australia have tightened rules for all arrivals in response to the new variant while hundreds and thousands of would-be travellers are now considering to cancel or delay their trips in response to renewed restrictions.

*The Economic Times - 02.12.2021*

<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/global-jet-fuel-demand-under-pressure-from-omicron-border-curbs/88026462>

### **OPEC will continue with supply adjustments for oil market, chief says**

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) will continue with its supply adjustments for the oil market, the OPEC Secretary General said on Saturday. "We will continue to do what we know best to ensure we attain stability in the oil market on a sustainable basis," Mohammad Barkindo said in a webinar organised by Italian think-tank ISPI. Oil prices fell on Thursday after OPEC and its allies stuck to their existing policy of monthly oil output increases despite fears a release from U.S. crude reserves and the new Omicron coronavirus variant would put renewed pressure on prices. Barkindo said in terms of oil demand the estimate at the moment was for a growth of 5.7 million barrels per day. "In 2022 we expect another 4.2 million," he said. He said the uncertainty and volatility on the markets was also due to extraneous factors such as the ongoing Covid pandemic and not necessarily the fundamentals of oil and gas. "Now we are on course of returning the level of consumption in 2022 to pre- COVID levels," he said. Barkindo said that the forecast was for oil and gas to account for more than 50% of the global energy mix in 2045 or even to mid-century.

*The Economic Times - 06.12.2021*

<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/opec-will-continue-with-supply-adjustments-for-oil-market-chief-says/88098722>

## **Steel demand drops by 5% in FY21: Union minister informs Parliament**

Demand for steel from sectors like infrastructure, automobile and engineering fell by more than 5 per cent to 94.9 million tonnes during the financial year ended on March 31, 2021, Parliament was informed on Monday. Building and construction sector along with infrastructure, automobile, engineering and packaging and defence had consumed 100.2 million tonne (MT) steel during 2019-20 fiscal, Union Steel Minister Ram Chandra Prasad Singh said while replying to a question in the Rajya Sabha. According to the information shared by Singh to the house, the building and construction sector consumed 41 MT steel in 2020-21 as against 43.4 MT in 2019-20. The demand in infrastructure sector also fell to 23.8 MT from 25.1 MT a year ago. Engineering and packaging industry consumed 20.9 MT steel compared to 22 MT in 2019-20. At 8.4 MT in 2020-21, the demand from automobile industry was lower compared to 8.8 MT in the year-ago-fiscal. Defence industry also saw demand falling to 0.9 MT from 0.8 MT in the previous 2019-20 financial year.

*Business Standard - 30.11.2021*

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/steel-demand-drops-by-5-pc-in-fy21-union-minister-121112900931\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/steel-demand-drops-by-5-pc-in-fy21-union-minister-121112900931_1.html)

## **Pawan Kumar takes over as Director (Commercial) at IGL**

Pawan Kumar has taken over as Director (Commercial) of Indraprastha Gas Ltd, the largest CNG distribution company of the country operating city gas distribution networks in 27 districts of ten geographical areas across Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Rajasthan. Kumar has taken over the position of Director (Commercial) from Amit Garg, who has been repatriated to his parent organization BPCL to head the new vertical of renewable energy, IGL said in a statement. IGL is a joint venture of GAIL (India) Ltd and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) along with the Government of NCT of Delhi. "A graduate in Industrial Engineering from prestigious Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Roorkee and post graduate in management from SP Jain Institute of Management & Research, Mumbai, Kumar is a senior leader in hydrocarbon space having a rich experience of over 33 years across multiple regions in various roles during his tenure in BPCL," the statement said.

*The Economic Times - 03.12.2021*

<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/pawan-kumar-takes-over-as-director-commercial-at-igl/88062334>

## **Rakesh Kumar Jain joins as Director (Finance), GAIL**

Rakesh Kumar Jain today assumed charge as Director (Finance) of GAIL (India) Limited. A Cost and Management Accountant by profession, Jain started his career in the company as a Management Trainee and gathered a rich experience of nearly 30 years as he rose through the ranks to his present position. Prior to his appointment as Director (Finance), Jain held the position of Executive Director (Finance & Accounts) in GAIL. Additionally, Jain holds the position of Director in Indraprastha Gas Limited. Earlier he was on the Board of Ratnagiri Gas and Power Pvt. Ltd (RGPPL). He joined GAIL in 1992 and has been a part of the growth trajectory of the Company. As Executive Director (Finance & Accounts), he headed Corporate Finance and Treasury section in large mobilisation of funds from domestic and international markets and took investment decisions in large infrastructure projects. He was also actively involved in Investor relations and interactions with Analysts fraternity.

*Sarkaritel - 02.12.2021*

<https://www.sarkaritel.com/rakesh-kumar-jain-joins-as-director-finance-gail/>

## **Anjani Kumar Tiwari assumes charge as Member at PNGRB**

Anjani Kumar Tiwari assumes the charge as Member, PNGRB on Wednesday. Before joining Member, PNGRB, Tiwari worked in GAIL (India) Limited and as Director (Finance). He held the position of Director in GAIL Gas Ltd., Green Gas Ltd., Bhagyanagar Gas Ltd, GAIL Gas (USA) Inc, and GAIL Global (USA) LNG LLC. PNGRB Board quorum is complete now with joining of Tiwari. Gajender Singh has already joined the board. With 11th round bidding, 96 per cent of India's population and 86 per cent of its geographical area will cover for City Gas Distribution in the country. PNGRB is focusing on increasing share of natural gas in India's energy mix. Besides, creation of infrastructure to support higher consumption of natural gas in India, PNGRB is committed to balance the interest of consumers, transporters and producers.

*Millennium Post - 04.12.2021*

<http://www.millenniumpost.in/business/anjani-kumar-tiwari-assumes-charge-as-member-at-pngrb-460656>

## **Alok Tandon (IAS) gets additional charge as Petroleum Secretary**

Ministry of Mines Secretary Alok Tandon (IAS) has been assigned with the additional responsibility of Secretary of Petroleum & Natural Gas (MoNG). The Central government has approved the assignment of the additional charge of the post of Secretary of MoPNG to Tandon on Tuesday. According to an order from the Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT), Tandon has been given additional charge of the post with immediate effect and till the appointment of a regular incumbent or until further orders, whichever is earlier. Earlier, Tarun Kapoor (IAS) was serving as Petroleum Secretary but he superannuated on November 30.

*PSU Connect – 30.11.2021*

<https://psuwatch.com/alok-tdandon-ias-gets-additional-charge-as-petroleum-secretary>