

Daily Economic News Summary: 09 October 2017

1. India may face pressure to open up ecommerce

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

India is expected to face pressure to begin talks to open up cross-border digital trade and also ease investment norms in a crucial two-day meeting of trade ministers of key countries in Marrakech beginning Monday. Trade ministers of many developed and developing countries, including India, are meeting on October 9-10 for a mini-ministerial of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) ahead of the ministerial conference in Argentina later in the year.

2. Group of Ministers set up to make GST composition scheme more attractive

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

A group of ministers or GoM has been set up under Assam finance minister Himanta Biswa Sarma to make the composition scheme more attractive and to revisit the goods and services tax rates on restaurants. The GST Council, chaired by finance minister Arun Jaitley and consisting of his state counterparts, had on 06.10.2017 constituted the GoM, which will submit its report within two weeks. With only 15.5 lakh of the total 98 lakh businesses registered under the GST regime opting for the composition scheme, the GST Council decided to set up the GoM to examine measures to make it more attractive.

3. GST council adopts concept paper discouraging tinkering with rates

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

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council will actively discourage any further tweaks in rates, following a major revamp of the indirect tax regime on Friday to help small industries and exporters. A concept paper adopted by the council says no manufactured goods should be given

outright exemption as this would hinder the Make in India initiative. States should opt for direct subsidy transfers if they want to reduce tax incidence on any item. This suggests that companies looking for such breaks like Apple would not be able to get any outright tax exemptions.

4. NHAI plans system to detect accidents, jams

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

National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has decided to introduce a robust system to promptly detect accidents and any incidents such as traffic jams or breakdown of vehicles across its stretches. To begin with, the incident management system will cover nearly 11,000 km in Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. These stretches will have adequate deployment of ambulances, surveillance vehicles, tow-away cranes at regular intervals. All these will be mapped, connected and controlled by an IT-based regional command center for real-time detection of incidents and quick response.

5. Coal imports up 10% in September as power plants face fuel shortage

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

Coal imports rose by 9.5 per cent to 18.33 million tonnes (MT) in September, after having registered year-on-year decline for five months in a row, as some power plants faced fuel shortages. "Coal imports (all types) in September 2017 stood at 18.33 MT (provisional), against 16.73 MT in September 2016," according to latest data by m-junction services. There was a revival of coal demand post monsoon rains, mjunction CEO Vinaya Varma said, adding that at present the buyers are looking for restocking for the approaching winter months.

6. European Union pushes for adoption of a Free Trade Agreement

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

India and European Union on 06.10.2017 adopted a comprehensive action plan (through a joint statement) to combat international terrorism including criticizing terror act by Rohingya terrorists besides sending a clear message to China by emphasising on UNCLOS for resolving all maritime territorial disputes. The EU on its part pushed for adoption of a Free Trade Agreement to push trade partnership with the continent being India's single biggest trading partner as a bloc. Europe that has come under series of terror attacks for past couple of years decided to expand scope and ambit of counter-terror partnership at the 14th edition of India-EU summit here.

7. EEPC India concerned over trade liberalising RCEP with China

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

Apex exporters' body EEPC India on 06.10.2017 cautioned Union Commerce Minister Suresh Prabhu against any trade liberalising broader Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) framework with a pre-dominant presence of China through ASEAN. "In order to understand India's present trade position with all the RCEP partners, we have also conducted a Balance of Trade (BoT) analysis which clearly shows that India has been consistently maintaining trade deficits with most of the trading partners.

8. Indian exports to China up by 40.69% in Jan-Aug period

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

India's exports to China, which have been showing signs of revival this year after years of slump, registered a 40.69 per cent rise year-on-year to reach \$10.60 billion in the first seven months of 2017. Fired by exports of zinc, iron ore and steel, total Indian exports to China registered a 38.6 per cent increase year-on-year in August this year totaling to \$1.26 billion, the sharpest increase this

year. The India-China bilateral trade increased 18.34 per cent year-on-year to reach \$55.11 billion from January to August this year, according to official data accessed by Beijing.

9. India, EU hold 14th summit talks to boost overall ties

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

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the top leadership of the European Union today deliberated on a range of key issues to boost overall ties between India and the 28-nation bloc. The two sides reviewed a full spectrum of their ties at the 14th summit with a focus on ramping up two-way trade and investment. European Council President Donald Franciszek Tusk, and European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker were part of the high-level EU delegation.