

Daily Economic News Summary: 26 September 2019

**1. HDFC Bank emerges as India's most valuable brand; Reliance Jio placed 9th among list of top 10 brands**

Source: Firstpost ([Link](#))

The largest private sector lender HDFC Bank has emerged as the most valued Indian brand at \$22.70 billion. The list of top ten brands, prepared by the world's largest media buyer WPP, includes companies from banking, financial services and insurance, telecom and auto segments. A brand's overall fortunes had a direct bearing on the brand valuations, as seen in the telecom space, where Airtel's value fell by 10 percent to \$10 billion, while Reliance Jio's value went up by 34 percent to \$5.47 billion. The Mukesh Ambani-run largest telco was placed ninth in the list of brands, while the second-largest telcom firm was still holding to the fourth place. Among the state-run companies, insurance behemoth LIC was placed second, valued at \$20 billion with a 2 percent growth, while banking giant SBI was fifth at \$8.40 billion with a surge of 7 percent.

**2. Govt probing significant rise in imports of single-mode optical fibre, may impose safeguard duty**

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

The government may impose safeguard duty on imports of single-mode optical fibre, as it has initiated a probe into sudden and significant surge in the inbound shipments of the product following a complaint from the domestic industry. According to a notification of the Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR), an application has been filed by Sterlite Technologies and Birla Furukawa Fibre Optics for imposition of safeguard duty on the fibre as the increase in imports is impacting them. "After determining that there is a sufficient evidence to justify initiation of safeguard investigation, the directorate general initiates an investigation," the DGTR has said in a notification.

**3. India announces \$ 14 million grant for Caribbean Island states; to support capacity building**

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

India, in a first such initiative, has announced \$ 14 million grant for community development projects in the Caribbean Islands and also expressed support to specialized capacity building courses for professionals in these countries. India's historic relations with the countries of the

Caribbean witnessed a new momentum with the meeting of Modi with 14 leaders of the CARICOM group of countries on sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly on 25 September in New York. Allen Chasteenet, Prime Minister of St Lucia and current Chairman of CARICOM co-chaired the meeting. At the meet Modi announced a \$ 14 million grant for community development projects in the CARICOM and another 150 million Line of Credit for solar, renewable energy and climate- change related projects.

#### **4. Mukesh Ambani richest Indian with net worth of Rs 3,80,700 crore: Report**

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

Reliance Industries' Chairman Mukesh Ambani has topped the list of richest Indians for the eighth consecutive year, with a net worth of Rs 3,80,700 crore, according to the latest IIFL Wealth Hurun India Rich List. London-based SP Hinduja & family, with assets worth Rs 1,86,500 crore, retained the second rank in the list, followed by Wipro founder Azim Premji at the third place with a wealth of Rs 1,17,100 crore. According to the latest IIFL Wealth Hurun India Rich List, the number of Indians having a net worth of more than Rs 1,000 crore has grown to 953 this year from 831 in 2018; while, the number of billionaires in terms of US dollar has reduced to 138 from 141.

#### **5. Narendra Modi in US: India reforms just beginning; salient points from his investment pitch**

**Source: Financial Express ([Link](#))**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 25 September said that the recently announced corporate tax cut reform provides a big opportunity to the global investors to partner with India. It comes after the government reduced the effective corporate tax rate to 25.17 per cent from nearly 35 per cent, thus bringing India at par with major global economies on taxation front. For investors looking for a market with scale, India provides a great opportunity, Narendra Modi said in his address to the US business leaders in New York. “Let me tell you, the new government is only three-four month old. I want to assure that this is only the beginning. Still there is a long way to go. In this journey we want to partner with the global business community. This is a golden opportunity for you,” PM Modi said. On reforms, Modi said that the country has performed brilliantly on all indices, owing to constant reforms brought about by his government.

## **6. India's textile exports tumble as Bangladesh, Vietnam get preferred access in EU**

**Source: Financial Express ([Link](#))**

India's textile and apparel industry is facing strong headwinds as key competitors such as Bangladesh and Vietnam are given preferred access in India's biggest textile market — the European Union. These could make it increasingly more difficult for India's apparel exporters to maintain their competitiveness in the EU, which accounts for over one-third of India's apparel exports. Even, India's containerised exports to China declined by 20 per cent in the second quarter of the current fiscal year, led by a reduction in demand for India-made textiles & apparel. These were large export commodities in the corresponding period last year.

## **7. Farmers can now register themselves for PM-Kisan**

**Source: The Hindu, Business Line ([Link](#))**

The government has opened the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-Kisan) portal for self-registration by farmers this week, but farmers from West Bengal, the State that has refused to implement the scheme, will still not benefit from the move as the task of vetting the registrations lies with State authorities, sources in the Agriculture Ministry said on Wednesday. Participating in a conference last week, PM-Kisan CEO and Joint Secretary in the Agriculture Ministry, Vivek Aggarwal said the PM-Kisan portal would be made public this week. Farmers who have not been enrolled can use the opportunity to register themselves. Besides, the enrolled farmers can access the portal to check by themselves about disbursements made to their accounts while others whose names were registered but haven't started getting the instalments can carry out minor corrections that are holding back the disbursement.

## **8. Rivigo becomes eighth unicorn startup of 2019, valued at \$1.05 billion**

**Source: Livemint ([Link](#))**

Trucking logistics firm Rivigo is the eighth Indian startup to become a unicorn — valued a billion dollars or more — this year, after it raised \$4.9 million from a South Korean fund, KB Platform Fund, according to regulatory filings with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs. Entracker first reported the development. It is now valued at \$1.05 billion, from the \$950 million it was valued at in February last year, when it raised \$50 million from SAIF Partners and private equity major Warburg Pincus. Rivigo has been out to raise fresh capital for over a year now, and Mint reported in September last year that it is in talks to raise \$400 million. However, it hasn't been

able to do so, and has been topped up by existing backers SAIF and Warburg, who last invested \$65 million in July this year.

### **9. Govt plans to set up body to regulate medical devices sector**

**Source: Business Standard ([Link](#))**

The government is planning to set up a Medical Devices Authority (MDA) for the entire spectrum in the medical devices sector — gauges, weighing machines, orthopaedic implants or whatever. It will, however, not have powers on pricing. That will continue to be vested with National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA), senior officials said. The proposed body will be separate from the Central Drugs Control Standard Organisation (CDSCO), which will continue to be the regulator for drugs. The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) will still frame guidelines but these would be regulated by MDA. The arrangement would be on the lines of food items, where BIS designs the standards but these are enforced by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India. For, BIS itself doesn't have implementing powers, said a senior government official who is working on the proposed MDA.

### **10. At 6%, UN body projects 7-year low GDP growth for India in 2019**

**Source: Business Standard ([Link](#))**

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has pegged India's economic growth rate at a seven-year low of 6 per cent in calendar year (CY) 2019. It also highlighted the pitfalls of shadow banking in countries such as India and China, citing the example of Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services (IL&FS). The UN body also pointed towards challenges in meeting sustainable development goals (SDGs) at a time when private debts are rising globally. India's economy grew 7.4 per cent in CY18. It grew below 6 per cent in 2012 — called the policy paralysis year — under the UPA 2 government. "Growth projections for India have been marked down because of a sharp fall to 5.8 per cent in the first quarter of CY19 (relative to the corresponding quarter of the previous CY)," said UNCTAD in its trade and development report for 2019.