

Daily Economic News Summary: 29 January 2018

1. India, Eurasian Economic Union to Hold Talks on Trade Pact

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

The government has worked out the details of a possible free trade agreement with the five nation Eurasian Economic Union (EaEU), which is expected to give a big boost to the country's Eurasia policy. A person close to the development told ET that a preparatory technical meeting between Indian and EaEU officials on the trade pact will take place on January 30-31 to lay the foundation for the trade talks. "This is a technical meeting to get things going for a trade agreement," this person said requesting anonymity. The project proposes greater movement across Nhava Sheva in Mumbai through Bandar Abbas in Iran to Astrakhan in Russia and Baku in Azerbaijan.

2. Business Leaders, Top Policy Makers to Address GBS 2018

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

At a time when the country is undergoing significant structural reforms that will determine the future trajectory of the Indian economy, the fourth edition of Global Business Summit (GBS) presented by YES Bank and The Economic Times is scheduled to take place in New Delhi on February 23-24, 2018. In a short span of four years, GBS has become the platform of choice for top CEOs, government officials and the country's elite. The theme for the 2018 edition is 'New Economy, New Rules'. The mission of the Global Business Summit is to convene some of the foremost thinkers and leaders from diverse sectors globally and provide a platform for exchange of cutting-edge ideas to find actionable solutions to problems.

3. Economic Survey 2017-18 to be out Today: How Accurate Were Past Editions?

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

After the 2009-10 economic survey, which projected economic growth on the dot for 2010-11, most surveys in succeeding years have been off track in predicting growth. Surprisingly, the only other exception was the survey of 2015-16 that pegged economic growth in a range of 7-7.75 per cent for 2016-17 and actual growth was indeed 7.1 per cent. The growth fell in the range predicted by the survey despite the year witnessing demonetisation. The major setback in terms of prediction

could be the survey of 2010-11, which had forecast growth to be nine per cent for 2011-12 (plus or minus 0.25 per cent) but growth fell down to just 6.5 per cent. Nine per cent growth has remained wishful thinking in recent times even after the change in the GDP computation methodology, which many say overestimates the growth.

4. Asia's Largest Drip Irrigation Project by MEIL in Karnataka to Take Off Sunday

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

Asia's largest drip irrigation project, involving 2,150 kilometres of pipeline, at Ramthal Marola area of Bhagalkot district in Karnataka, took off on Jan 28. The project, executed by one of India's largest infrastructure firms Megha Engineering & Infrastructures (MEIL), will be inaugurated by the Karnataka water resources minister MB Patil. The project, envisioned by Krishna Bhagya Jala Nigam and built with technical assistance from the Israel firm Netafim, the first project in India with Israeli drip irrigation technology, will be maintained by MEIL for five years.

5. MPEDA and Swiss Company Tie up Develop Organic Aqua Farming In 1000 Hectares in Kerala

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

In a first-of-its-kind tie-up in India's marine sector, COOP Cooperative, one of Switzerland's biggest retail and wholesale companies, is partnering with Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) to develop export-oriented organic aqua farming in India to cater to the growing demand for organic seafood products across the globe. Kochi-based based companies JASS Ventures and Baby Marine International will collaborate with COOP to organize the supply chain in Kerala and process the produce through organic methods.

6. Union Budget to Focus on Kick-Starting Investments

Source: Livemint ([Link](#))

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley is likely to unveil several steps to spur investments as the government seeks to boost economic growth and accelerate job creation when he presents the federal budget on 1 February, the last full-year one before general elections are due in 2019, a person familiar with the development said. The government will allocate more funds for infrastructure and rural development, and offer sops for politically important constituencies such

as the middle class, farmers, and small and medium enterprises, the person said, requesting anonymity. The Indian economy, Asia's third largest, is forecast to expand 6.5% in the year to 31 March, the slowest pace in at least four years, partly the result of demonetization and implementation issues related to the goods and services tax (GST).

7. After 11 Years, Rs 100-Bn Udangudi Power Project Finally Set to Take Off

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

After being delayed for nearly 11 years, work on the Udangudi Super Critical Thermal Power Project is set to begin. The estimated Rs 100-billion project, to be funded by Rural Electrification Corporation (REC), will be executed by Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) in 42 months. BHEL and the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board (TNEB) had signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to develop this power project in 2007, when the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) was in power in the state.

8. India, ASEAN Target Swift Deal on RCEP

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

With an aim to further trade ties, India and ASEAN on Friday agreed to target a swift conclusion to the comprehensive and mutually beneficial Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) in 2018. Both sides also reaffirmed their commitment to enhance physical and digital connectivity in line with the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 and the ASEAN ICT Masterplan (AIM) 2020 by availing the \$1-billion line of credit announced by India.

9. Possible for India to be in Top 50 on Ease of Business Index, Says Arun Jaitley

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

Improving India's ranking in the world bank's ease of doing business index is "reasonably possible" if various machineries, including the tax department, make concerted efforts to improve the three laggard parameters, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said on Jan 27. He added that out of the 10 criteria which the World Bank follows there are actually three that need to be improved—one relating to municipal permission of land and buildings, the other is trading across borders and third one is contract enforcement.