

**Daily Economic News Summary: 4 December 2019**

**1. Indonesia plans to divert palm oil exports to India if EU cuts imports**

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

Indonesia, the world's largest producer of palm oil, is focusing big on exports to countries like India and China to overcome the likely setback it may face from the European Union, which may cut down on imports of palm oil products because of concerns about the environmental damage caused by land-clearing fires. The country produces around 40 million tonnes of palm oil every year and exports 73% of it. "EU alleges Indonesia of deforestation caused by palm oil plantation expansion. But the fact is that, we are not expanding our plantation.

**2. India-Japan summit: Focus on Rs 13,000 cr investment in Northeast**

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

The India-Japan summit in Guwahati on December 15-16, the first annual summit to be held in the Northeast, is expected to give a major push to the India-Japan Act East Forum as Japan plans to invest around Rs 13,000 cr in projects in the eight states of the region. Japan has either invested or is planning to invest in a host of projects in Northeast India that include water supply project in Guwahati, road network in Assam-Meghalaya, forest management and agriculture projects in other states of the region, which serves as a gateway to Southeast Asia, said people aware of the matter. New proposals for the region may be announced by Japan at the annual summit, they said.

**3. UDAN 4.0: Now J&K, Ladakh, other hilly areas to get affordable air connectivity**

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

With an aim to further increase connectivity to remote areas, the government on 3 December invited bids from airlines under the fourth round of bidding of its regional connectivity scheme UDAN. With an aim to further increase connectivity to remote areas, the government on Tuesday invited bids from airlines under the fourth round of bidding of its regional connectivity scheme UDAN. The latest round launched by the civil aviation ministry will focus on priority areas such as NER, Hilly States, J&K, Ladakh and islands, the government said in a statement. Under the scheme, financial incentives in terms of concessions from the centre, state governments, and airport operators are extended to selected airlines to encourage operations in

the regional areas and keep airfares affordable. The inclusion of helicopter and sea plane operation under NSOP license has also been allowed in the fourth round of bidding.

**4. Nirav Modi's PNB scam gets bigger: Fraudulent LoUs worth this much more discovered**  
**Source: Financial Express ([Link](#))**

The 329-page forensic report of BDO was handed by a whistleblower to the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) which has partnered with The Indian Express for a series of reports on the findings of the forensic team. Almost two years after the Punjab National Bank (PNB) reported the scandal involving diamantaire Nirav Modi, an exhaustive forensic audit commissioned by the bank has come to light, revealing the depth and extent of the rot and the ease with which fraudulent practices were carried out systematically by his chain of companies, remaining undetected for years. Belgian auditor BDO, commissioned by PNB in February 2018, days after it complained to the CBI, looked at information supplied until June 2018 and found that a total of 1,561 Letters of Undertaking (LoUs), valued at Rs 28,000 crore, were issued by PNB to the Nirav Modi group.

**5. 'One Nation One Ration Card' to be effective nationwide from June: Ram Vilas Paswan**  
**Source: Financial Express ([Link](#))**

Under the initiative, eligible beneficiaries would be able to avail their entitled food grains under the National Food Security Act from any Fair Price Shop (FPS) in the country using the same ration card. The government's 'One Nation One Ration Card' initiative that will largely cover migrant labourers and daily wagers will come into force across the country from June 1, 2020, Union minister Ram Vilas Paswan said on Tuesday. Under the initiative, eligible beneficiaries would be able to avail their entitled food grains under the National Food Security Act from any Fair Price Shop (FPS) in the country using the same ration card. This would be made available after biometric/Aadhaar authentication on ePoS (electronic Point of Sale) devices, Paswan, the Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, told the Lok Sabha

**6. Nitin Gadkari pitches for reducing paper imports**  
**Source: Financial Express ([Link](#))**

India needs to discourage large-scale paper imports to boost the domestic paper industry, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari said on 3 December. The MSME minister also pitched for use of bamboo as a raw material by the industry as different types of papers can be made using bamboo. The government has allocated Rs 1,300 crore towards 'Bamboo Mission', he said. "India is

witnessing large-scale paper imports despite the presence of diversified paper sector in the country. I am especially concerned about the growth prospects of small scale paper and pulp industries, an important part of MSME sector.

**7. Govt open to further reforms for making India a more attractive investment destination:  
Nirmala Sitharaman**

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

Seeking investment from global players, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on 3 December said the government is open to further reforms for making India a more attractive investment destination. The government has taken various steps, including a reduction in corporate tax, she said at the India-Sweden Business Summit here. Without sharing details of future reforms, the finance minister said, "I only can invite and assure that the Government of India is committed for further reforms in various sectors whether it is banking, mining or insurance and so on." She further said that the government is addressing challenges faced by the industry not just Indian-owned but operationalise industries which are present in India.