

Daily News Monitor: 25 March 2021

1. CAG for setting up of time-frame for roll out of simplified GST return forms

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

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) on 25 March made a case for setting up a definite time-frame for roll out of simplified GST return forms as frequent deferments are resulting in delay in stabilisation of return filing system. The GST return system is still a work in progress despite more than three years of GST rollout, CAG audit report presented in Parliament said. In the absence of a stable and simplified return mechanism, one of the main objectives of roll out of GST i.e. simplified tax compliance system is yet to be achieved, it said. “During the current audit, we noticed that owing to the continuing extensions in the roll out of simplified return forms, and delay in decision making, the originally envisaged system-verified flow of ITC through ‘invoice matching’ is yet to be implemented and a non-intrusive e-tax system still remains unimplemented,” it said.

2. Rajya Sabha returns Finance Bill 2021, completing Parliamentary approval for Budget

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

The Rajya Sabha on 25 March returned the Finance Bill 2021 without any new amendment, completing the Parliamentary approval for Budget 2021-22. The Upper House debated the amended Finance Bill 2021 that was approved by the Lok Sabha on Tuesday. It returned the bill after Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had to curtail her reply to the discussion on the legislation after a verbal spat with TMC members over implementation of central schemes such as PM Kisan Yojana and Ayushman Bharat in West Bengal. While Sitharaman said the state government had not given names of farmers for giving cash help under the PM Kisan Yojana, TMC members countered saying the state had given the nod for the scheme and the minister was not speaking the truth. The two houses had previously approved the Appropriation Bill, authorising spending of certain sum of money.

3. Fresh Round: Dream 11 parent firm raises \$400 million

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

Dream Sports, which owns online fantasy sports platform Dream11, has closed a \$400-million secondary investment round led by new investors TCV, D1 Capital Partners and Falcon Edge. Post this fund-raise, the firm’s valuation has jumped over \$4 billion, a source said. The company had raised \$225 million at a valuation of \$2.5 billion in September last

year. The current financing round also marks TCV's first investment in India. TCV has invested in global tech companies including Netflix and Airbnb.

4. Fintech start-up Khatabook acquires Biz Analyst for \$10 million

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

Aiming to leapfrog in its next phase of growth, fintech start-up Khatabook has acquired Biz Analyst, a SaaS business management application, in a deal worth \$10 million as a mix of cash and equity. With this acquisition, Khatabook will offer its customer base of over 10 million monthly active merchants an opportunity to scale up their businesses by utilizing premium value-added services. The startup is scouting for other such acquisitions in order to add more services to the platform. Backed by marquee investors such as Facebook co-founder Eduardo Saverin, Cred's Kunal Shah, and Snapdeal co-founders Kunal Bahl and Rohit Bansal, this acquisition is a part of Khatabook's efforts on monetisation and growth. "We will continue to be on the lookout for good software companies which will add value to our MSME ecosystem," said Ravish Naresh, CEO and Co-founder, Khatabook. The startup has been working towards digitising the workflow of micro entrepreneurs.

5. India continues to stay out of Kearney's 25-country 2021 FDI Confidence Index, US tops

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

India continued to stay out of the Kearney FDI Confidence Index for the second year in a row, a report by the global consultancy firm showed Wednesday with only three developing economies- China, the UAE, and Brazil-making it in the top 25. However, investors are "likely monitoring closely" India's data privacy bill with implications for data rules, it said. India was ranked 16th in the 2019 list, while it occupied 11th spot the year prior. In 2017, India made the top ten and was ranked eighth. As per the report, investors in Asia are particularly concerned about data protection regulations, with 43 % citing high costs associated with data privacy rules versus 41 % of investors in the Americas and 38 % in Europe.

6. Govt hopeful of resolving Iran's currency issue by next month; export to resume soon

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

As India's export of commodities like sugar to Iran has been hit due to Tehran's rupee reserves shortage with Indian banks, the government on Wednesday said the two nations are negotiating for the use of other currencies for bilateral trade and is hopeful of resolving the matter by next month. Iran's rupee reserves have reduced significantly in India's UCO and IDBI Bank NSE -3.95 %, the two banks authorised to facilitate rupee trade. As a result,

exports of agri-commodities like sugar, tea and rice have almost stopped because exporters are not sure of getting paid on time. "Our negotiations with Iran are on. The Ministry of External Affairs is negotiating. We hope to see a breakthrough soon. ...We are trying to resolve this by April," Food Secretary Sudhanshu Pandey told.

7. India likely to resume new bankruptcy filings after halt expires

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

India's government is considering resuming fresh bankruptcy filings after the current suspension expires on March 25, people with knowledge of the matter said. The lifting of the halt would come even as a resurgence in virus cases threatens the nascent economic recovery. It could spark a wave of new insolvencies, pent up from last year when businesses were hurt by India's first economic contraction in decades. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government last year halted the proceedings to insulate cash-strapped borrowers hit by the pandemic for six months starting March 25, and that was extended twice during the year.