Daily News Updates

5th Sept 2025

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OCS CORNER
Where Everyday Is Exam Day

ସମ୍ବାଦ

ଶ୍ରେଷ୍ଠ ଶହେରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାରୁ ୫

ସରକାରୀ ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟର ନୈରାଶ୍ୟଜନକ ପ୍ରଦର୍ଶନ

ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର, ୪/୯(ଇମିସ): ନ୍ୟାସନାଲ ଇନଷ୍ଟିଚ୍ୟୁସନାଲ୍ ରାଙ୍କିଙ୍ଗ୍ ଫ୍ରେମୱାର୍କ(ଏନ୍ଆଇଆରଏଫ୍)-୨୦୨୫ ତାଲିକାରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ସରକାରୀ ଶିକ୍ଷାନୁଷ୍ଠାନଗୁଡ଼ିକ ପୁଣିଥରେ ନୈରାଶ୍ୟଜନକ ପ୍ରଦର୍ଶନ କରିଛନ୍ତି। ମୋଟ ୧୭ଟି ବର୍ଗକୁ ନେଇ ହୋଇଥିବା ଏନ୍ଆଇଆର୍ଏଫ୍ ରାଙ୍କିଙ୍ଗ୍‌ରେ ଏଥର ମଧ୍ୟ ରାଜ୍ୟ ସରକାରଙ୍କ କୌଣସି ଗୋଟିଏ ବି ଶିକ୍ଷାନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ସମଗ୍ର ସଫଳତାକୁ ଆଧାର କରି ପ୍ରକାଶିତ ଶ୍ରେଷ୍ଠ ଶହେ ଭିତରକୁ ଆସିପାରି ନାହାନ୍ତି। ବରଂ ଦୁଇଟି ଘରୋଇ ଓ ୩ କେନ୍ଦ୍ରୀୟ ଶିକ୍ଷାନୁଷ୍ଠାନକୁ ମିଶାଇ ରାଜ୍ୟର ମୋଟ ୫ଟି ଶିକ୍ଷାନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ଶ୍ରେଷ୍ଠ ଶହେ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ରହିଛନ୍ତି।

ସମଗ୍ର ସଫଳତା ବର୍ଗରେ ଶିକ୍ଷା ଓ ଅନୁସନ୍ଧାନ(ସୋଆ) ଡିମ୍‌ଡ ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ ଏ ବର୍ଷ ୨୫ତମ ସ୍ଥାନରେ ରହିଛି। କଳିଙ୍ଗ ଇନ୍‌ଷ୍ଟିଚ୍ୟୁଟ୍ ଅଫ୍ ଇଣ୍ଡଷ୍ଟ୍ରିଆଲ ଟେକ୍ନୋଲୋଜି(କିଟ୍) ଡିମ୍‌ଡ ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ ୨୭ତମ, ଏନ୍ଆଇଟି ରାଉରକେଲା ୩୪ତମ, ଆଇଆଇଟି ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ୮୦ତମ ଓ ଏମ୍ସ ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ୧୦୦ତମ ସ୍ଥାନରେ ରହିଛି। ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱରସ୍ଥିତ ସିଭି ରମଣ ଗ୍ଲୋବାଲ ୟୁନିଭରସିଟି ଓ ଓଡ଼ିଶା କୃଷି ଓ ବୈଷୟିକ ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ(ଓୟୁଏଟି) ୧୫୧ରୁ ୨୦୦ ସ୍ଥାନ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ରହିଛନ୍ତି। ଉତ୍କଳ ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ ଦେଶର ୨୦୦ ଶିକ୍ଷାନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ସ୍ଥାନ ପାଇପାରି ନାହିଁ।

ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ ବର୍ଗରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାରୁ ଦୁଇଟି ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ ସ୍ଥାନ ପାଇଛନ୍ତି। ସୋଆ ୧୫ତମ ଓ କିଟ୍ ୧୭ତମ ସ୍ଥାନରେ ରହିଛି। ପୂର୍ବବର୍ଷ ପରି ଏଥର ମଧ୍ୟ ସିଭି ରମଣ ଗ୍ଲୋବାଲ ୟୁନିଭର୍ସିଟି, ଓୟୁଏଟି, ସମ୍ବଲପୁର ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ ସହ ଉତ୍କଳ ୧୦୧ରୁ ୧୫୦ ସ୍ଥାନ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ରହିଛନ୍ତି। ସମ୍ବଲପୁର ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ ସମେତ ସେଞ୍ଚୁରିଅନ୍ ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ ଓ ଭିଏସ୍ଏସ୍ୟୁଟି ୧୫୧ରୁ ୨୦୦ ରାଙ୍କ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ରହିଛନ୍ତି। ଗବେଷଣା ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ବର୍ଗର ଶ୍ରେଷ୍ଠ ୫୦ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଏନ୍ଆଇଟି ରାଉରକେଲା ୩୦, କିଟ୍ ୪୩, ସୋଆ ୪୯ତମ ସ୍ଥାନରେ ରହିଛି। ରାଜ୍ୟ ପବ୍ଲିକ ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟଗୁଡ଼ିକୁ ନେଇ ହୋଇଥିବା ରାଙ୍କିଙ୍ଗ୍‌ରେ ଉତ୍କଳ ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟର ପ୍ରଦର୍ଶନ ନୈରାଶ୍ୟଜନକ ହୋଇଛି। ୨୦୨୪ରେ ୪୨ତମ ସ୍ଥାନରେ ଥିବା ଉତ୍କଳ ଏଥର ୪୮ତମ ସ୍ଥାନକୁ ଖସି ଆସିଛି। ଏହି ବର୍ଗରେ ବ୍ରହ୍ମପୁର ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ, ଫକୀରମୋହନ ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ, ଓୟୁଏଟି, ରେଭେନ୍ସା, ସମ୍ବଲପୁର ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ, ଭିଏସ୍ଏସ୍ୟୁଟି ୫୧ରୁ ୧୦୦ ସ୍ଥାନ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ରହିଛନ୍ତି।

ଦେଶର ଶ୍ରେଷ୍ଠ ୧୦୦ ଇଂଜିନିୟରିଂ କଲେଜ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଏନ୍ଆଇଟି ରାଉରକେଲା ୧୩, ସୋଆ ୨୨, କିଟ୍ ୩୬, ଆଇଆଇଟି ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ୩୯, ସିଭିରମଣ ଗ୍ଲୋବାଲ ୟୁନିଭରସିଟି ୯୫ ତମ ସ୍ଥାନରେ ରହିଛନ୍ତି। ୧୫୧ରୁ ୨୦୦ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଭିଏସ୍ଏସ୍ୟୁଟି ବୁର୍ଲା, ୨୦୧ରୁ ୩୦୦ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ପାରଳାଖେମୁଣ୍ଡିସ୍ଥିତ ସେଞ୍ଚୁରିଅନ୍ ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ, ସିଇଟି ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର, ଗାନ୍ଧୀ ଇଞ୍ଜିନିୟରିଂ କଲେଜ, ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱରସ୍ଥିତ ଗାନ୍ଧୀ ଇନ୍‌ଷ୍ଟିଚ୍ୟୁଟ୍ ଫର୍ ଟେକ୍ନୋଲୋଜିକାଲ ଆଡଭାନ୍ସମେଣ୍ଟ (ଗୀତା), ଗୁଣୁପୁରସ୍ଥିତ ଜିଆଇଇଟି ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ, ସିଲିକନ୍ ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ ସ୍ଥାନ ପାଇଛନ୍ତି। ମ୍ୟାନେଜମେଣ୍ଟ ଶିକ୍ଷାନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ବର୍ଗରେ ଜାଭିଅର ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ୪୫, ସୋଆ ୬୬, କିଟ୍ ୬୮ତମ, ଆଇଆଇଏମ୍ ସମ୍ବଲପୁର ୯୪ତମ ସ୍ଥାନରେ ରହିଛନ୍ତି।

ସେହିପରି ଦେଶର ଶ୍ରେଷ୍ଠ ୫୦ ମେଡିକାଲ କଲେଜ ବର୍ଗରେ ଏମ୍ସ ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ୧୪, ସୋଆ ୧୫ ଓ କିଟ୍ ୨୪ତମ ସ୍ଥାନରେ ରହିଛି। ଆଇନ ବର୍ଗରେ ଦେଶର ଶ୍ରେଷ୍ଠ ୪୦ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ସୋଆ ୧୦, କିଟ୍ ୧୪, ନ୍ୟାସନାଲ ଲ' ୟୁନିଭରସିଟି, କଟକ ୧୫ତମ ସ୍ଥାନରେ ରହିଛି। ଦେଶର ୪୦ଟି ଶ୍ରେଷ୍ଠ ଆର୍କିଟେକଚର ଓ ପ୍ଲାନିଂ ବର୍ଗରେ ଏକମାତ୍ର ଶିକ୍ଷାନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ଭାବେ ଏନଆଇଟି ରାଉରକେଲା ୭ମ ଏବଂ କୃଷି ବିଜ୍ଞାନ ବର୍ଗରେ ଏକମାତ୍ର ଶିକ୍ଷାନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ଭାବେ ଓୟୁଏଟି ୧୯ତମ ସ୍ଥାନରେ ରହିଛି। ସଷ୍ଟେନେବୁଲ୍ ଡେଭଲପ୍‌ମେଣ୍ଟ ଗୋଲ୍‌ରେ ଏନ୍ଆଇଟି ୯ମ ସ୍ଥାନରେ ରହିଛି। ମୁକ୍ତ ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ ଓ ସ୍କିଲ୍ ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ ତାଲିକାର ୩ଟି ସ୍ଥାନରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର କୌଣସି ଶିକ୍ଷାନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ନାହିଁ।

BHUBANESWAR Edition
Page No.4 September 05, 2025

OCS CORNER
Where Everyday Is Exam Day

Economy

Cars get cheaper, festive sales likely to hit top gear

Sub-4 metre cars with engines below 1,200 cc and 1,500 cc to attract 18% GST; dealers expect increased buyer interest in price-sensitive segments; bigger cars will invite a 40% GST, but removal of cess will boost net savings on purchase

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) overhaul will make cars cheaper this festive season across segments. Entry-level and mid-segment cars priced ₹14 lakh and below will see a reduction up to 13% in GST and cess, making them more attractive to a price-sensitive customer base. High-end cars with engines above 1,200 cc are set to become 5-10% cheaper.

Small cars that run on petrol, LPG and CNG with engines below 1,200 cc, and diesel cars of up to 1,500 cc and with a length under 4 metres will attract a GST of 18% instead of 28%. The cess of 1% and 3% will no longer be applicable.

"The benefit is greater for entry and mid-level segment as there is price sensitivity. The news will definitely bring cheer to buyers, and we expect more footfall at showrooms," said Vinkesh Gulati, vice-president, Automotive Skill Development Council, and former president of the Federation of Automobile Dealers Association.

Unsoo Kim, managing director of Hyundai Motor India Ltd., called the GST revision a move that will "strengthen consumer confidence". The company has 60% of its internal combustion engine portfolio under the 18% slab rate, with the remainder at 40%. All mid-sized and large cars, up to and above 1,500 cc and over 4 metres in length, will attract a higher GST of 40% instead of 28%. But the net savings of 5-10% come from a complete removal of cess, which stood at 17% for passenger vehicles with up to 1,500 cc engines, 20% with over 1,500 cc engines, and 22% for SUVs.

"Government listened to the automotive industry's long-standing wish list of rationalising GST rates. This will induce the much-needed impetus by boosting consumption and bring momentum to the automotive industry which essentially remains the pulse of the Indian economy," said Santosh Iyer, managing director & CEO, Mercedes-Benz India, in a press statement.

The flat GST on electric vehicles remains unchanged at 5%.

Higher GST for bikes

However, motorbike enthusiasts have been left disappointed as high-end two-wheelers with bigger engines will invite a higher GST of 40% instead of the prevalent 31% rate that includes 28% GST and 3% cess for bikes with engines above 350 cc.

There is also small relief expected in vehicle servicing and repair costs as the GST on spare parts has been brought down to 18% from 28%, but due to the varying taxation for different items such as rubber and fibre, the eventual benefit will accrue where there is a net drop.

The GST on commercial vehicles such as buses and trucks has dropped from 28% to 18%. "This will not only reduce logistics costs for the economy, but encourage customers to upgrade their fleets with modern, fuel efficient and safer trucks and buses," said Vinod Aggarwal, vice-chairman, EML, and managing director & CEO of VE Commercial Vehicles.

But dealerships rue that the implementation of the new rates comes into effect three weeks later on September 22. They fear that this will result in some buyers postponing their purchase. Also, due to the removal of cess, dealerships are staring at a loss of ₹2,500 crore because of credit payments made on the cess for the inventory already purchased from automakers.

Dealers deposit the cess as a credit item at the time of their purchase and make the actual deposit on the GST portal once they sell the car to a buyer.

There is a lowering of tax on farm equipment too from 18% to 5% for tractors and parts. "These GST reforms will accelerate mechanisation by making tractors, harvesters, balers and implements more affordable, while lowering overall operating costs for farmers," said tractor and construction equipment maker CNH India's president & managing director, Narinder Mittal.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Item	Existing GST rate	New rate
All solar-power based devices such as cookers, water-heaters, lanterns	12%	5%
Windmills	12%	5%
Bio gas plants	12%	5%

SPORTS & TOYS

Item	Existing GST rate	New rate
Sports gloves, tricycles, dolls, playing cards	12%	5%

Zero GST is expected to increase penetration of health, life insurance

Bindu Shajan Perappadan
Lalatendu Mishra
NEW DELHI/MUMBAI

The healthcare industry has welcomed the zero GST on individual health and life insurance policies, calling it a master stroke.

The GST Council's decision to bring down the GST on individual life and health insurance policies from 18% to zero will make more families opt for medical cover, said analysts and industry executives.

An insurance cover will ease burden on families when medical inflation is rising sharply and is unchecked, they said.

Shobana Kamineni, executive chairperson, Apollo Healthco, said on Thursday that the move made health protection a right, not a privilege.

Anand Roy, CEO and managing director, Star Health and Allied Insurance, said the "reform will reshape the insurance landscape, accelerating penetration, driving higher renewal rates, building deeper customer loyalty, and being a critical catalyst for future growth".

"This progressive reform will directly benefit patients by lowering treatment costs, improving affordability, and expanding access to essential medical technologies," said Himanshu Baid, managing director, Poly Medicure Ltd., said.

Insurance covers will ease burden on families when inflation is rising sharply, say experts

However, industry executives said scrapping the tax on insurance services would mean that insurers would lose access to input tax credits on expenses linked to such policies. Insurers will be required to reverse input tax credits relating to these exempt outputs. This embedded tax could eventually feed into the costing structure, impacting the profits of the companies, they said.

Terming the GST Council's decision a "much-needed reform", Joydeep Saha, managing director and chief executive officer of ManipalCigna Health Insurance, said it would help millions of households safeguard themselves against unforeseen medical expenses without worrying about affordability, at a time when medical costs and healthcare inflation are on the rise. "The reform will not only benefit existing customers but also empower more families to opt for health insurance coverage," Mr. Saha said.

"This move will encourage greater penetration, especially among first-time buyers and underserved sections of society. For the industry, it represents a meaningful opportunity to bridge the protection gap and innovate in product offerings. Overall, we see this as a transformative push for greater financial inclusion and societal well-being," he said.

The exemption is scheduled to come into force on September 22, coinciding with the transition to a streamlined two-rate GST structure. This change will apply to premiums on all individual life insurance, whether pure protection or unit-linked, and to individual health insurance, including family floater and senior citizen plans.

"The exemption also extends to the reinsurance of these individual policies, ensuring tax neutrality across the risk management chain. However, the benefit is limited to individual covers. Group insurance policies, such as employer-sponsored health or life schemes, will continue to attract 18% GST with no input tax credit available to the employers," said Jignesh Ghelani, Partner at Dhruva Advisors.

"This makes it clear that the policy intent is to directly ease costs for households rather than institutional buyers," he said.

The industry said reduced GST on medicines and medical devices was a progressive reform.

While healthcare services by doctors, hospitals, and diagnostic centres were exempt under the GST regime, the government has announced a series of GST rationalisation measures to promote a health-positive tax regime, the Health Ministry said.

HEALTHCARE

Item	Existing GST rate	New rate
All drugs and medicines intended for personal use	12%	**5%**
Medical apparatus	18%	**5%**

PERSONAL CARE

Item	Existing GST rate	New rate
Talcum powder, hair oil, shampoo, toothbrushes	18%	**5%**
Combs, diapers, napkins	12%	**5%**

EDUCATION

Item	Existing GST rate	New rate
Mathematical boxes, geometry boxes and colour boxes	12%	**5%**
Maps, charts, and globes	12%	**0%**
Stationery products	12%	**0%**

OTHERS

Item	Existing GST rate	New rate
Tables, paper products, cotton and jute handbags, tools	12%	**5%**

TOBACCO

Item	Existing GST rate	New rate
Cigars, cigarettes, and nicotine-based substitutes	28%	**40%**
Beedis	28%	**18%**

TEXTILES

Item	Existing GST rate	New rate
Sewing thread, twine, textile materials, fabrics, carpets	12%	**5%**
Quilted textile materials	12%	**18%**

White goods makers anticipate a cracker of a festive season

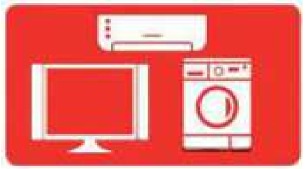
The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The consumer appliances industry welcomed with enthusiasm the reduction of GST rates on air conditioners and dishwashers and the standardisation of rates for all television variants, especially ahead of the festive season.

The GST Council slashed rates on air-conditioners and dishwashers from 28% to 18%, while it standardised the rate on all types of televisions to a lower 18%. Previously, the purchase of televisions housed two tax rates – 18% and 28% – depending on the screen size being within or more than 32 inches.

Manish Sharma, chairman of appliance manufacturer Panasonic Life Solution India, said that the move would "directly benefit consumers, especially as we step into the festive season". He added the rationalisation, coupled with the upward revision in income tax slabs for exemption during the Budget, would "create a strong momentum for the consumer durables sector, driving high demand across urban and emerging markets".

Ravi Agarwal, co-founder and managing director at the India-based manufacturer of appliances and gadgets Cellecor, added the rationalisation would not only enhance affordability but also simplify compliance and operational efficiency for manufacturers and brands.



No change for phones

The council, however, did not alter the GST on smartphones, tablets and laptops. While welcoming the revision for consumer appliances, Pankaj Mohindroo, Chairman at the India Cellular & Electronics Association (ICEA), said, "We also remain hopeful that the rationalisation of GST on smartphones and laptops will be considered in the future, given its potential to improve affordability and strengthen digital inclusion."

Premium air travel to become costlier; industry anguished

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

The airline industry has termed the Centre's decision to raise goods and services tax on premium air travel, including premium economy and business class flight tickets, from 12% to 18% "disappointing".

The revised taxes will come into effect from September 22 and apply both for domestic and international flights offered by Indian and foreign carriers.

"Aviation has tremendous potential to contribute to India's economic growth, both directly as Indian airlines grow, and indirectly through increased connectivity for travellers and businesses alike. It is therefore disappointing to hear of a decision to increase the GST on non-economy travel with no clear justification," said International Air Transport Association's regional vice-president, Asia Pacific, Sheldon Hee.

Over the years, this component of tax had more than doubled, growing from the 8.6% rate in 2017 under the service tax regime to 18%, he added.

'Must consider risks'

"This increase runs counter to the efforts of Indian carriers, which have been investing in their premium products to enhance the travel experience on their flights," Mr. Hee said, adding that India must consider the risks of such policies on dampening demand and undermining profitability.

While first-, business- and premium economy-class travel is offered by foreign carriers, among Indian airlines, Air India offers business and premium economy travel on domestic and international flights. IndiGo too has introduced business-class seats on flights to Mumbai and Bengaluru from New Delhi as well as to Singapore, Bangkok and Dubai, which will grow to 12 total routes by the end of 2025.

Economy

SERVICES *Input Tax Credi

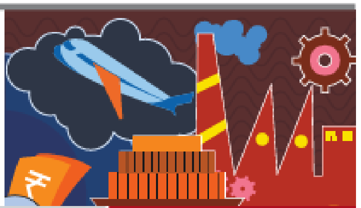
Item	Existing GST rate	New rate
All individual health insurance, along with reinsurance thereof	18%	0%
Air transport of passengers in other than economy class	12% with ITC*	18% with ITC
Hotel accommodation (₹7,500 or below)	12% with ITC	5% with ITC
Admission to casinos, race clubs, any place having casinos or race clubs, or sporting events like the IPL	28% with ITC	40% with ITC

Auto, pharma sectors cheer GST slabs; airlines say wings clipped

Auto-makers expect tax cut will boost demand; airlines slam higher GST on non-economy seats; small entrepreneurs worried about higher labour costs; textile industry disappointed over the 18% duty for garments priced above ₹2,500

Likes & dislikes

The **new GST rates** were largely welcomed by most sectors, but there were also some discontents



POSITIVE	MIXED	UPSET
Auto manufacturers: Lower tax will **boost demand**	**Insurance sector:** Good for consumers, but could **eat into profits** of insurers	**Airlines:** 18% rate on non-economy tickets **makes premium travel more expensive**, potentially making some routes unviable
Pharma: Will make medicines more affordable	**Apparel makers:** Higher GST on expensive clothes a negative	**Vegetable oil makers:** Inverted duty structure should be removed for vegetable oils
Consumer appliance firms: Will lower prices ahead of the festive season	**Automobile dealers:** Though lower taxes are welcome, there are concerns about **potential delays in purchases**	**Micro and cottage entrepreneurs:** Increase in rate on labour charges will increase costs for MSMEs

Poor, neo middle-class, middle-class women, students, farmers, youth... everyone will benefit

NARENDRA MODI
Prime Minister

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

While the goods and services tax (GST) rate changes authorised by the GST Council on Wednesday night brought cheer to the auto, insurance, consumer appliances, pharmaceuticals, and renewable energy sectors, among others, some of that was tinged with reproach. A few sectors are outright upset with the tax changes.

The stock market, too, reflected this mixed response on Thursday, initially reacting positively but ending the day nearly flat, with the Sensex up just 0.2% from the previous day.

The airlines slammed the higher GST on non-economy seats. Vegetable oil producers called for the resolution of the inverted duty structure on edible oils, which means that the GST rate on raw materials in their industry is higher than the rate on the finished product. This mismatch was something that the Council corrected for the fertilizer and man-made textiles industries.

The increase in the GST rate for labour charges, from 12% to 18%, has also led to some resistance, with small entrepreneurs saying that they would be hit hard by the change.

Mixed response

While the textile industry has welcomed the revision of GST rates for both man-made fibre and cotton sectors, it has also expressed its disappointment over the 18% duty for garments priced above ₹2,500 each.

The Cloth Manufacturers Association of India pointed out that such garments are also consumed in large numbers by the common man, especially in the form of woollens, wedding wear, traditional clothing, handlooms, and embroidered clothes. Charging 18% GST on these will make them significantly more costly, it said.

This nuanced cheer can be seen in the auto sector as well.

Auto manufacturers have welcomed the rate rationalisation for the sector, along with the removal of the GST Compensation Cess applicable on cars.

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As per the new rates, entry-level and mid-segment cars priced up to ₹14 lakh will see a tax reduction of up to 13 percentage points, while high-end cars with engines above 1200 cc too are set to see an 8 to 10 percentage point cut in their tax rate.

Auto dealers, however, have voiced some worries about consumers postponing their purchases until September 22, when the new rates come into force, and have called for greater clarity on what happens to the cess on vehicles they have already bought from manufacturers but not yet sold to customers.

The healthcare industry's reaction has been more unequivocally positive, saying that the decision to reduce GST from 12% to 5% on a wide range of medical products.

Consumer appliance makers were also upbeat about the GST rate cuts, saying they would boost demand, especially in the run-up to the festive season.

(With inputs from Sharad Raghavan, Jagriti Chandra, M. Soundariya Preetha, Lalatendu Mishra, Saptaparno Ghosh, and Bindu Shajan Perappadan)

GST 2.0 is a landmark in India's tax journey

The 56th meeting of the GST Council on September 3, 2025 will be remembered as a defining milestone in India's tax history. These reforms go far beyond tax rates and structures. They represent a decisive shift towards a simpler, fairer, and growth-oriented system that is aligned with the aspirations of a Viksit Bharat 2047.

A long-standing demand of both industry and consumers has been simplification of the multiple GST slabs (5%, 12%, 18%, and 28%). The move to a transparent "Simple Tax", with just two rates, 18% as the Standard Rate and 5% as the Merit Rate, along with a 40% de-merit rate for a select few goods – is transformational.

This bold step reduces compliance burdens, enhances predictability for business, and makes the tax regime more citizen-friendly. It clearly signals the government's commitment to align Indian taxation with the best global practices.

Chandrajit Banerjee

is Director General, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)

Relief for a range of income groups

The reforms directly touch the daily lives in Indian households. Common items such as soap, shampoo, toothpaste, a bicycle, and kitchenware are now in the 5% bracket. Essentials such as Ultra-High Temperature milk, *paneer*, *chapati* and *paratha* are exempt. Packaged foods, noodles, chocolates and beverages have seen notable rate cuts, boosting consumption and offering relief to families across income groups.

Equally impactful is the exemption of GST on all life and health insurance products. This single decision will make insurance more affordable, particularly for senior citizens and low-income families, raising India's insurance penetration and strengthening social security.

Health care has been given a powerful boost through exemptions and reductions on essential drugs, devices, and treatments for cancer, rare diseases and chronic conditions. These measures ensure wider access to modern medicine and diagnostics, easing financial burdens on households. Farmers stand to benefit from major reductions. Tractors, farm machinery, and other vital implements now attract only 5% GST, while fertilizers and inputs such as sulphuric acid and ammonia have moved from 18% to 5%. By correcting earlier inverted duty structures, these reforms lower cultivation costs and improve farm productivity.

Labour-intensive sectors such as handicrafts, marble, granite, and leather goods now enjoy reduced GST rates, which will stimulate demand and secure employment. By making traditional industries more competitive, the reforms safeguard livelihoods while opening new growth avenues.

The simplification of the multiple GST slabs is an example of people's reform

Changes in critical sectors

A particularly significant achievement is the correction of inverted duty structures in critical sectors. For instance, the GST reduction on man-made fibre and yarn to 5% eliminates a distortion that had long plagued the textile value chain. This move is expected to boost competitiveness, exports, job creation, and domestic value addition across textiles and apparel.

Cement, a cornerstone for housing and infrastructure, has shifted from 28% to 18% GST. This will drive multiplier effects across construction and infrastructure, while cuts for renewable energy devices and automotive components will accelerate India's green growth journey.

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has consistently called for such corrections and is gratified to see so many recommendations accepted that range from a rationalisation of auto parts to relief for hospitality and wellness services. These changes will harmonise markets and reduce unnecessary disputes.

The announcement that the Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT) will become operational by year-end marks a historic institutional advance. For tax-payers, this means faster dispute resolution, more consistent rulings, and enhanced trust in the system. Other process reforms, including provisional refunds for inverted duty structures, risk-based compliance checks, and harmonisation of valuation rules, further reduce uncertainty and compliance costs. Together, these measures reinforce India's position as one of the world's easiest large economies for doing business.

Over the past eight months, the CII has strongly advocated simplification into a two-rate structure, a correction of anomalies, a reduction of rates on essentials, support for labour-intensive sectors, and faster operationalisation of GSTAT. It is heartening that so many of these have now been adopted.

The Council's decisions reflect both responsiveness and a deep sense of partnership with industry. This is a proud moment for all stakeholders who have constructively engaged in shaping these reforms.

Almost immediate benefits

Equally noteworthy is the careful phasing of reforms from September 22, 2025. This sequencing ensures revenue stability while allowing industry and consumers to benefit immediately from lower rates. The approach safeguards fiscal health while stimulating demand and investment.

These announcements are more than technical adjustments. They are a people's reform. They touch citizens, farmers, workers, businesses and entrepreneurs alike. By simplifying the structure, lowering rates on essentials, correcting distortions, and strengthening institutions, GST 2.0 has created a stronger foundation for India's growth journey.

The CII stands ready to support effective implementation, build awareness, and ensure that the benefits of these reforms flow seamlessly to every citizen.

Cuts in time

GST rate cuts will boost consumption at a time when exports face challenges

The sweeping changes to the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime, authorised by the GST Council on Wednesday, have come as a shot in the arm for the mood of the people, and, potentially, for the economy overall. Few things spur optimism and demand as effectively as tax cuts. The Centre did well to push the GST Council towards these reforms, which rose to the occasion and cleared them quickly. Criticism that these reforms have come too late is neither here nor there. The GST Council is a federal body, and any of the States could have suggested these rate cuts earlier but did not. The appropriateness of the Prime Minister's announcement of the reforms in his Independence Day speech, coming as it did before either the relevant Group of Ministers or the GST Council met, can be questioned. But here, too, the fact that the Council announced its decisions on the first day of what was supposed to be a two-day meeting shows that the States were on board. The minutes of the 56th meeting will reveal each member's stated position. The rate changes span nearly every sector, and are, overwhelmingly, in the downward direction. Very few items, such as high-end motorcycles and higher priced apparel, are set to become more expensive. Tempting as it was to pack the 40% bracket with more items, the GST Council did well to keep it narrow. Overall, these rate cuts, coupled with the income-tax rate cuts announced in Budget 2025, should serve as a much-needed boost to consumption at a time when other engines of growth such as exports and private investment are sputtering.

The government has maintained that the revenue implication of these GST rate cuts would be around ₹48,000 crore a year, based on 2023-24 consumption data. Given the scope of the cuts, this seems like an underestimation. However, only time will tell what the actual number will be. It is to be noted that the GST Council decided to do away with the compensation cess, despite Opposition-governed States calling for one to protect their revenues. Such a cess would have diluted the rate rationalisation and simplification efforts and is best eschewed. Instead, the States are now going to have to look to their own revenue sources, as well as the 16th Finance Commission, to offset the losses they face. The new GST 2.0 still has some anomalies, and is still more complicated than it needs to be, but the removal of duty inversions and the easing of paperwork are a huge improvement. The government should now revive the National Anti-Profiteering Authority, at least temporarily, to ensure that the rate cuts are passed on once they kick in on September 22.

Centre approves creation of new, independent class of 'environment auditors'

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

The Environment Ministry has authorised the creation of a new, independent class of "environment auditors" to supplement the work of State pollution control Boards in inspecting and verifying projects for compliance with environmental laws. Private, accredited agencies can also undertake environment impact assessment studies that will then be appraised by expert committees.

Under the new rules, called the Environment Audit Rules, 2025, private agencies can get themselves accredited as auditors. Environment auditors can get licences and be authorised to evaluate project compliance with environmental laws and adherence to best practices in prevention, control, and abatement of pollution.

Audits by private agencies can be used for compliance with Green Credit Rules.

"The overall framework for monitoring and compliance within the existing environmental framework is presently supported by the Central Pollution Control Board, the Regional Offices of the Ministry, and the State PCBs/Pollution Control Committees, which are facing constraints in terms of manpower, resources, capacity, and infrastructure. These limitations hamper their ability to monitor and enforce environmental compliance across the vast number of projects and industries operating," said a press statement by the Ministry.

"This scheme aims to bridge the manpower and infrastructure deficits, thereby strengthening the effective implementation of environmental compliance mechanisms. Furthermore, the scheme is designed to ensure greater transparency, accountability, and credibility in the compliance monitoring process, fostering trust among stakeholders and promoting sustainable environmental governance."

Audits undertaken can be used for compliance with Green Credit Rules, under which individuals and organisations can gain tradeable "credits" for afforestation, sustainable water management, and waste management, among other activities.

Centre re-starts retail sale of onions

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The "calibrated and targeted disposal" of onions from the buffer stock is an integral part of government's efforts to control food inflation and maintain stable price regime, Union Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi said here on Thursday inaugurating the retail sale of onions at a rate of ₹24 for a kilogram through the outlets of the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd (NAFED) and the National Cooperative Consumers' Federation of India Ltd (NCCF).

Mr. Joshi said keeping food inflation under control is a priority of Government and various direct interventions through price stabilisation measures have played important role in bringing down inflation rate in recent month.

The retail sale of onions is being started in Delhi, Mumbai and Ahmedabad

The retail sale of onions is being started in Delhi, Mumbai and Ahmedabad through outlets and mobile vans of NCCF, NAFED and Kendriya Bhandar and also through distribution partners of NAFED and NCCF.

Centre and Manipur govt. ink peace pact with Kuki-Zo groups

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry and the Manipur government signed a Suspension of Operations (SoO) pact with the Kuki-Zo insurgent groups on Thursday with "re-negotiated terms and conditions or ground rules", the Ministry said on Thursday.

The development comes ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's expected visit to Manipur on September 13, his first since violence between the Kuki-Zo and Meitei people erupted on May 3, 2023.

Security forces will conduct verification of cadres and de-list foreign nationals, if any, the Ministry said. A government official said once identified, the foreign nationals would be deported. The revised ground rules reiterate territorial integrity of Manipur and relocation of camps of insurgent groups.

Core pact

The agreement was signed with 're-negotiated terms and conditions or ground rules'

- The revised ground rules reiterate territorial integrity of Manipur and relocation of camps run by insurgent groups

- The rules also stress need for a negotiated solution to bring lasting peace and stability to the State

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TIGHTENED NORMS
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Centre, Manipur ink pact with Kuki groups

Prior to May 3, 2023, the SoO groups demanded autonomous territorial councils within Manipur, but post-violence the demands changed.

Asked if the SoO groups have given up their demand for a separate administration or Union Territory with a legislature, Seilen Haokip, spokesperson Kuki National Organisation (KNO), one of the signatories, told *The Hindu*, "Though the agreement speaks about territorial integrity of Manipur, it also mentions political settlement within the Constitution of India. The Constitution speaks about the integrity of the country, not a district or a State."

He added that "negotiated political settlement within Constitution of India" is a new inclusion in the agreement as it was not there in the 2008 text when the demand was for territorial councils in Manipur. The Kuki-Zo Council (KZC), a conglomerate of civil society organisations, agreed to open the National Highway-2 (Imphal-Dimapur) passing through Kangpokpi district "for the free movement of commuters and essential goods", the Ministry said.

'India's birth rate down, first dip in TFR in 2 years'

Abhinay Lakshman
NEW DELHI

India's Crude Birth Rate (CBR), the number of children born per 1,000 people in the population in a year, has declined 0.7-points from 19.1 in 2022 to 18.4 in 2023. The country's Total Fertility Rate (TFR) has fallen for the first time in two years to 1.9 in 2023, according to the latest Sample Registration Survey Statistical Report for 2023. In 2021 and 2022, India's TFR remained constant at 2.0.

The report, released by the Office of the Registrar General of India this week, revealed that the highest CBR was in Bihar at 25.8, and the lowest was in Tamil Nadu at 12. Bihar reported the highest TFR (2.8) among the bigger States and Union Territories (UTs), and Delhi reported the lowest (1.2).

The report pointed out that 18 States and UTs had reported a TFR of below the replacement level TFR of 2.1. Replacement level TFR denotes the average number of children each woman needs to give birth for one generation to replace the other.

The latest data was sourced from Sample Registration Survey Statistical Report released this week

The RGI released the Civil Registration System (CRS), Sample Registration System (SRS), and Medical Certification of Cause of Death (MCCD) reports for 2021 after a four-year delay in May this year, and in June, the SRS, CRS, and MCCD data for 2022 were released. While the SRS for 2023 has been made public, the corresponding CRS and MCCD datasets are yet to appear on the Census website.

The SRS 2023 datasets showed that the proportion of the elderly in the country (people above 60) rose by 0.7 percentage points in a year to 9.7% of the population. Kerala has the highest proportion of elderly population at 15%. Assam (7.6%), Delhi (7.7%), and Jharkhand (7.6%) reported the lowest proportion of their respective populations to be above 60.

The TFR data, which denotes the average number of children expected to be born per woman during her entire span of reproductive period, further showed that all States reporting TFR that is higher than replacement level were in northern India - Bihar (2.8), Uttar Pradesh (2.6), Madhya Pradesh (2.4), Rajasthan (2.3), and Chhattisgarh (2.2). The States and UTs reporting the lowest TFR included Delhi (1.2), West Bengal (1.3), Tamil Nadu (1.3), and Maharashtra (1.4).

What Rajasthan's new, tougher anti-conversion Bill says

HAMZA KHAN
JAIPUR, SEPTEMBER 4

THE STATE government on Wednesday tabled the Rajasthan Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Bill, 2025 in the Assembly after withdrawing a similar Bill that was tabled in February. The Bill is expected to come up for discussion on September 9.

Rationale behind proposed law

The Bill says that in the past, many "gullible persons have been converted from one religion to another by misrepresentation, misinformation, force, undue influence, propaganda, coercion, allurement or by fraudulent means", and there is a need to prohibit such conversion, including by marriage or on the pretext of marriage.

In an interview with *The Indian Express* last year, Rajasthan Law Minister Jogaram Patel had said the Bill was being introduced to prevent forcible conversions, especially of vulnerable communities such as tribals, and to check what the BJP calls "love jihad".

The Bill states that marriages for the "sole purpose of unlawful conversion or vice-versa" will be declared void. Like the old Bill, the new one also puts the burden of proof on the person accused of carrying out the religious conversion, or their abettor. All offences will be cognizable and non-bailable.

How new Bill is different

The new Bill expands the provisions of the older version, and imposes heftier penalties.

- It recognises "pretext of marriage", not just marriage itself, as "allurement for conversion". "Allurement" now also includes "portraying practice, rituals and ceremonies... of a religion in a detrimental way... or glorifying one religion against another religion".
- The new Bill introduces an exception for "*ghar wapsi*". It states that "the return of any person already converted to his original religion i.e. ancestral religion shall not be deemed conversion."
- The Bill makes provisions for attempts at conversion through digital means.
- The Bill expands the definition of "institutions" to include "all legal entities, educational institutions, orphanages, old age homes, hospitals, religious missionaries, non-governmental organisations and such other organisations of public character".
- The term "propaganda" is defined as "the systematic dissemination of information, ideas, or beliefs, including misinformation...with the intent to cause or facilitate unlawful conversion...".
- Earlier, only the aggrieved, their blood relatives, or those associated to them by marriage or adoption could lodge a complaint; now "any person" can lodge a complaint.

EXPLAINED POLICY

Stricter penalties

Those involved in unlawful conversion can be punished with a jail term of 7 to 14 years, along with a minimum fine of Rs 5 lakh. In the old Bill, the punishment was 1-5 years in jail and a minimum fine of Rs 15,000. The new Bill also proposes a punishment of 20 years to life imprisonment and a minimum fine of Rs 50 lakh for repeat offenders.

In case of unlawful conversion of a minor, a differently abled person, a woman, or a person belonging to a Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe (SC/ST), the punishment will be 10-20 years with a minimum fine of Rs 10 lakh. Earlier, this was 2-10 years with a minimum fine of Rs 25,000, with no specific provision for the differently abled.

In case of an unlawful mass conversion, the imprisonment would be from 20 years to life, and a minimum fine of Rs 25 lakh. Earlier, this was 3-10 years with a minimum fine of Rs 50,000. In certain special cases such as inducing fear, using force, assault, promise of marriage, marriage, and trafficking or conspiring to traffic, the Bill proposes a minimum term of 20 years and a maximum of life in prison, and a minimum fine of Rs 30 lakh.

Following an investigation, the property used for the said illegal conversion can be seized or demolished. An institution or organisation involved in illegal conversion stands to have its licence or registration cancelled "forever", have its property confiscated, its bank accounts frozen, and face a penalty of Rs 1 crore.

Converting 'voluntarily'

The Bill proposes a rigorous, months-long process. First, a declaration form must be submitted to the District Magistrate (DM) at least 90 days before the conversion. An advance notice of 60 days was needed in the earlier version of the Bill. The "convertor" (person performing the conversion ceremony) also has to give two months' advance notice to the DM instead of the one month notice prescribed earlier.

The new Bill introduces stricter penalties for violating these requirements.

The DM will display the proposal of religious conversion on the notice board of her office. In case an objection is raised, an inquiry will be conducted "with regard to genuine intention, purpose and cause of the proposed religious conversion," preferably "within ten days".

In case a declaration is made after the conversion, it would have to be submitted in a prescribed form within 72 hours of the conversion (instead of the 60 days in the older Bill). Here too the details would be displayed on a notice board and an inquiry conducted id objections are raised.

After filing this declaration, the person converting would have to appear before the DM within 10 days — it was 21 days earlier — to establish and confirm their identity.

LONGER VERSION ON
indianexpress.com/explained

Who are PVTGs & why govt wants to enumerate them separately

NIKHIL GHANEKAR
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 4

EXPLAINED POLICY

THE MINISTRY of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) wrote to the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India (RGI) last month, requesting them to consider enumerating particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTGs) separately in the upcoming Census.

In its letter, the MoTA has asked the RGI to capture the number of PVTG households, individuals, and their distinctive demographic, cultural and socio-economic features. The Ministry said that such information would help in the better implementation of targeted schemes for PVTGs, such as the Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyay Maha Abhiyan (PM JANMAN).

Who are PVTGs?

The PVTG status is accorded to Scheduled Tribes (STs) who have a declining or stagnant population, live in geographical isolation, use of pre-agrarian practices such as hunting and gathering, and suffer from economic backwardness and relatively low literacy.

This category was created based on the recommendations of the Dhebar Commission of 1960-61, officially the first first Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission, which had investigated the problems faced by STs. The Commission, led by former Congress president U N Dhebar, noted the disparity in socio-economic and living conditions between different tribal groups, and thus concluded that some tribal groups were "more vulnerable" than others.

Initially, 52 groups were identified as PVTGs (then known as Primitive Tribal Groups) during the Fifth Five-Year Plan (1974-1979). In 2006, the Centre accorded 23 more tribal groups PVTG status, taking the total to 75. At present, PVTGs are currently spread across 18 states, and the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Over the years, the criteria for identifying PVTGs, especially the marker of geographical isolation, have been questioned by many. Kamal K Misra, former director of the Anthropological Survey of India, told The Indian Express that before conducting a separate enumeration, the government should first revisit the inclusion criteria for PVTGs.

Has a separate enumeration of PVTGs taken place before?

No. PVTGs have never been enumerated separately in any census. However, since PVTGs are a subcategory of STs, some among the 75 groups are counted under the broad ST category. This is because many PVTGs are not listed separately, and grouped under one nomenclature. Moreover, lists of STs are state-specific.

The MoTA told Lok Sabha in December 2016 that out of 75 PVTGs in the country, 40 have been scheduled as "single entry". This means that they are explicitly listed in the notified list of STs under Article 342 of the Constitution.

For instance, in the 2011 Census, Baigas from Madhya Pradesh were enumerated separately. But not Abujh Marias, Bharias, Hill Korbas, Kamars. In 2013, Abujh Maria and Hill Korba were included in the ST list of Chhattisgarh in 2013, through a legislation in Parliament.

According to established norms, the data of only main STs are tabulated and released by the RGI, which include the data/population of their sub-groups/sections/synonyms.

Is there an estimate for the number of PVTGs in India?

In November 2023, the government rolled out the Rs 24,104-crore PM JANMAN scheme with an aim to improve the socio-economic status, health, education, livelihoods and amenities for PVTGs in more than 200 districts.

To implement the scheme, the MoTA, along with state governments, collected habitation level data in a survey to estimate the PVTG population. This exercise also involved the identification of infrastructure gaps in PVTG habitations.

As per the survey, there were an estimated 47.5 lakh PVTGs across India. At 13.22 lakh, Madhya Pradesh had the highest estimated population of PVTGs, followed by Maharashtra with an estimated population of 6.7 lakh, and Andhra Pradesh had about 5.18 lakh PVTGs.

As per the 2011 Census, 13 PVTGs, who were enumerated as part of the 40 single-entry STs, had a population of less than 1,000. These include Jarawas, Onges, Sentinelese, Shompens in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Raji in Uttarakhand, Kota in Tamil Nadu, Birhor in Odisha, Kamar in Madhya Pradesh, and Savar, Birhor, Birjia, Korwa, Parhaiya in Bihar.

With only 15 individuals, the uncontacted inhabitants of the North Sentinel Island make up the smallest of single-entry ST as per the 2011 Census. This figure, however, was a rough estimate based on offshore observations of the Sentinelese. The Baiga community of Madhya Pradesh, with a population of 4,14,526, were the most populous PVTG.

Government officials said that having an exact number along with demographic data would plug major gaps in the implementation of government schemes, especially in health and education initiatives. It will also help in understanding if PVTG classification criteria are still relevant, according to officials.

IIT-Madras tops NIRF rankings; Pradhan criticises 'peer perception' parameter

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

For the seventh straight year, the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras claimed the top overall position in the higher education rankings announced by the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) on Thursday. It also remained the country's best engineering college for the tenth straight year.

The NIRF's methodology, however, came in for some criticism from Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, who presented the India Rankings 2025 awards. He was especially skeptical about the 'peer perception' parameter, that carries 10% of marks for the ranking, and suggested that the NIRF

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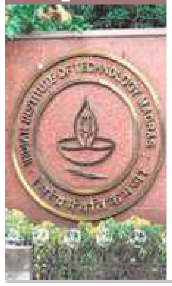
tional institutions had al-

Overall top 10



Six IITs make it to the … institutions in the ov…

1	Indian Institute
2	Indian Institute
3	Indian Institute
4	Indian Institute
5	Indian Institute
6	Indian Institute
7	Indian Institute
8	All India Institut
9	Jawaharlal Neh
10	Banaras Hindu

SOURCE: NATIONAL INSTI

THE TOPPERS

OVERALL

	2025	2024
1	IIT Madras	IIT Madras
2	IISc Bangalore	IISc Bangalore
3	IIT Bombay	IIT Bombay
4	IIT Delhi	IIT Delhi
5	IIT Kanpur	IIT Kanpur

ENGINEERING

	2025	2024
1	IIT Madras	IIT Madras
2	IIT Delhi	IIT Delhi
3	IIT Bombay	IIT Bombay
4	IIT Kanpur	IIT Kanpur
5	IIT Kharagpur	IIT Kharagpur

MANAGEMENT

	2025	2024
1	IIM Ahmedabad	IIM Ahmedabad
2	IIM Bangalore	IIM Bangalore
3	IIM Kozhikode	IIM Kozhikode
4	IIT Delhi	IIT Delhi
5	IIM Lucknow	IIM Calcutta

UNIVERSITIES

	2025	2024
1	IISc Bangalore	IISc Bangalore
2	JNU	JNU
3	Manipal Academy of Higher Education	Jamia Millia Islamia
4	Jamia Millia Islamia	Manipal Academy of Higher Education
5	Delhi University	Banaras Hindu University

COLLEGES

	2025	2024
1	Hindu College	Hindu College
2	Miranda House	Miranda House
3	Hans Raj College	St. Stephen's College
4	Kirori Mal College	Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Centenary College, West Bengal
5	St. Stephen's College	Atma Ram Sanatan Dharma College, Delhi

Source: NIRF 2025 report

Amid U.S. tariff lows, Guwahati Tea Auction Centre posts high growth

Rahul Karmakar
GUWAHATI

Amid the U.S. tariff lows, the Guwahati Tea Auction Centre (GTAC) has recorded a new high.

GTAC, the world's largest auction centre for CTC (crush, tear, and curl) or granular tea, and a major hub for the global tea trade, registered an "impressive growth" in sales during April-August 2025.

Dinesh Bihani, secretary of Guwahati Tea Auction Buyers' Association, said 76.94 million kg of tea was sold during this period. The volume included 72.70 million kg of CTC and dust teas at an average price of ₹223.30 per kg, and 4.24 million kg of orthodox or leafy teas at an average price of ₹279.08 per kg.

76.94 million kg of tea was sold during April-August 2025.

In 2024, 62.11 million kg of CTC and dust teas were sold at ₹252 per kg, and 2.18 million kg of orthodox teas were sold at ₹267.88 per kg. In 2023, the corresponding figures were 56.85 million kg at ₹205.37 per kg and 1.23 million kg at ₹221.6 per kg. "A year-on-year analysis highlights a consistent upward trajectory in volumes. CTC and dust volumes rose by 9.25% in 2024 over 2023, followed by a further 16.39% increase in 2025. Orthodox teas showed stronger momentum, growing by 77.24% in 2024 and nearly doubling again with a 94.5% increase in 2025," Mr. Bihani said.

GTAC officials said the tea crop is expected to increase by 20-25% during the current calendar year.