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Quick Commerce Infrastructure War Intensifies as Platforms Expand Beyond Groceries

India's quick-commerce firms are automating dark stores and expanding into electronics, apparel and lifestyle products, seeking faster deliveries, higher order values and improved efficiency despite profitability pressures.



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AgriTech Funding Takes Off as Smart Farming Startups Attract Fresh Seed Capital

India's agritech sector is attracting seed funding, with investors backing precision farming, post-harvest technology, supply-chain solutions, and scalable agricultural innovations.



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India's Fintechs Build Faster Cross-Border Payment Rails Across Southeast Asia

India's UPI ecosystem grows rapidly, with soundboxes and credit integration expanding digital payment adoption and transaction visibility.

Startup Times



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Indian Tech Funding Roars Back as Late-Stage Capital Crosses \$1.6 Billion

India's technology ecosystem is witnessing a strong revival in late-stage funding activity, with startups securing more than \$1.6 billion in fresh capital commitments this month. The surge reflects renewed investor confidence in scalable business models, particularly those focused on domestic consumption, e-commerce, fintech, and supply-chain logistics.

The funding momentum is being driven by investors seeking companies with proven revenue streams, operational efficiency, and clear paths to profitability. Consumer-focused ventures continue to attract significant attention as rising digital adoption and expanding middle-class spending create large market opportunities across urban and emerging markets.

Supply-chain and logistics startups have emerged as major beneficiaries of this capital influx. As businesses increasingly prioritize efficiency, automation, and faster delivery networks, investors are backing companies that can strengthen India's infrastructure and commerce ecosystem. These firms are leveraging technology to optimize warehousing, transportation, inventory management, and last-mile delivery operations.

The rebound also signals a broader shift in market sentiment. After a period of cautious investment activity, venture capital and growth-equity firms are once again deploying larger checks into mature startups capable of delivering sustainable growth.

Bengaluru Strengthens Position as EV Mobility Growth Engine

Bengaluru is emerging as a key mobility innovation hub as electric two-wheeler manufacturers and urban transit platforms rapidly expand fast-charging infrastructure across Tier-2 cities. The push aims to improve EV adoption, reduce range anxiety, and support growing commuter demand.

However, investors and operators are increasingly focused on sustainable unit economics, pushing companies to balance aggressive expansion with profitability, operational efficiency, and long-term network utilization.



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India's SportsTech Sector Gains Momentum as Analytics Startups Attract \$45 Million



Quick Commerce Infrastructure War Intensifies as Platforms Expand Beyond Groceries

India's quick commerce companies are investing heavily in automated dark stores across northern cities, expanding product ranges into electronics, apparel, and lifestyle categories. The infrastructure push aims to improve delivery speed and inventory efficiency while increasing order values. However, rising competition is putting greater pressure on profitability, unit economics, operational efficiency, and sustainable long-term growth.

India's quick commerce sector is entering a new phase of competition as leading ultra-fast delivery platforms accelerate investments in automated dark stores across major northern markets. What began as a race to deliver groceries within minutes has now evolved into a broader battle for consumer spending, with companies expanding their product offerings into categories such as electronics, fashion, personal care, home essentials, and lifestyle products. At the center of this transformation is the rapid deployment of technology-enabled dark stores—micro-fulfillment centers strategically located close to residential clusters. These facilities use advanced inventory management systems, automated picking solutions, and data-driven demand forecasting to improve delivery speed while optimizing operational costs. By increasing efficiency, companies aim to handle a wider range of products without compromising delivery timelines. The expansion reflects changing consumer behavior. Customers who initially relied on quick commerce platforms for urgent grocery purchases are increasingly using them for everyday shopping needs. This shift has encouraged operators to broaden their stock-keeping units (SKUs), enabling consumers to purchase everything from mobile accessories and headphones to apparel and household goods through a single platform. Northern India has emerged as a key battleground due to its dense urban population, growing digital adoption, and rising demand for convenience-led commerce. Cities such as Delhi, Gurugram, Noida, Jaipur, Chandigarh, and Lucknow are witnessing increased investments in fulfillment infrastructure as companies seek to strengthen their regional presence and improve service coverage. However, expanding product assortment presents operational challenges. Unlike groceries, categories such as electronics and fashion require more complex inventory planning, higher-value storage management, and greater quality control. To address these challenges, platforms are investing heavily in automation and analytics to ensure efficient stock rotation and minimize delivery errors. Investors are closely monitoring the sector's economics as competition intensifies. While rapid expansion can drive customer acquisition and market share growth, profitability remains a critical concern. Companies are therefore focusing on improving order density, optimizing logistics networks, and increasing average order values to create sustainable business models. Industry experts believe the next phase of quick commerce growth will depend less on delivery speed alone and more on the ability to build efficient infrastructure capable of supporting diverse product categories. As platforms continue to scale their dark-store networks and leverage automation technologies, the sector is expected to evolve into a comprehensive convenience - commerce ecosystem rather than a grocery-focused delivery service. With infrastructure investments accelerating and consumer expectations rising, the quick commerce industry is positioning itself as one of the most dynamic segments of India's digital economy. The ongoing infrastructure race is likely to reshape urban retail, redefine last-mile logistics, and create new opportunities across the broader e-commerce landscape in the years ahead.



Agritech Funding Takes Off as Smart Farming Startups Attract Fresh Seed Capital

India's agritech ecosystem is gaining renewed investor attention as startups focused on precision farming, post-harvest technology, and rural supply-chain optimization witness stronger momentum in institutional seed financing. The latest funding activity reflects growing confidence in technology-driven solutions designed to address inefficiencies across India's vast agricultural value chain.

Precision farming startups are attracting capital by developing technologies that help farmers make better decisions around irrigation, crop health, fertilizer use, pest management, and harvesting. Using sensors, satellite imagery, artificial intelligence, and Internet of Things (IoT) devices, these companies are enabling more data-driven agricultural practices while aiming to improve productivity and reduce input costs.

At the same time, post-harvest technology has emerged as another important investment category. A significant portion of agricultural value can be lost after harvesting because of inadequate storage, inefficient transportation, poor temperature management, and fragmented distribution networks. Startups are developing IoT-enabled monitoring systems, smart warehousing solutions, cold-chain technologies, and digital logistics platforms to address these challenges.

Investors are increasingly interested in businesses that can solve these structural problems while building scalable commercial models. Institutional seed rounds provide startups with the resources needed to expand technology deployment, strengthen product development, conduct field trials, and establish partnerships with farmers, cooperatives, food processors, retailers, and logistics companies.

The growing focus on rural supply chains also highlights a broader transformation within India's agricultural economy. Digital connectivity and smartphone adoption are allowing technology companies to reach farming communities that were previously difficult to serve. Platforms can now combine real-time data with localized insights, helping stakeholders coordinate everything from farm-level production to transportation and market access.

For investors, agritech presents an opportunity to participate in a large and relatively under-digitized market. However, the sector comes with unique challenges. Startups must contend with fragmented landholdings, varying farming practices, seasonal demand,



infrastructure limitations, and the need to demonstrate clear returns for customers. Building trust among farmers and achieving sustainable adoption can also require significant time and on-ground engagement.

As a result, investors are becoming increasingly selective. Companies demonstrating measurable improvements in productivity, lower operational costs, stronger supply-chain visibility, or reduced post-harvest losses are likely to attract greater attention. Business models that generate recurring revenue through enterprise partnerships or technology-as-a-service offerings may also prove more attractive than models dependent entirely on one-time transactions.

The current seed-financing momentum suggests that agritech is gradually moving beyond simple digital marketplaces toward deep technology and infrastructure-led solutions. Precision agriculture, connected equipment, intelligent storage, predictive analytics, and automated supply-chain systems could become important growth areas as the industry matures.

With institutional capital entering the sector, agritech startups have an opportunity to expand beyond pilot projects and build solutions capable of operating at national scale. The next phase of growth will depend on how effectively these companies convert technological innovation into practical, affordable, and commercially sustainable tools for farmers and agricultural businesses.

If funding momentum continues, India's agritech landscape could see a new generation of technology companies emerge around productivity, climate resilience, post-harvest efficiency, and rural logistics—strengthening the connection between farms, markets, and consumers.

Indian Fintechs Go Global as Southeast Asia Opens New Cross-Border Payment Corridors

Indian payment service providers are increasingly expanding their international footprint through partnerships with Southeast Asian payment gateways, creating faster and more efficient channels for cross-border transactions. The collaborations are designed to streamline real-time inward enterprise remittances while making SME trade settlements simpler, faster, and more transparent.

The growing connectivity between Indian and Southeast Asian payment ecosystems reflects the rapid digitalization of international commerce. Businesses engaged in trade with markets such as Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam are seeking payment infrastructure that can reduce settlement times, lower transaction costs, and provide greater visibility over cash flows.

For Indian SMEs, faster payment settlement could significantly improve working-capital management. Traditional cross-border transactions can involve multiple intermediaries, currency conversions, and reconciliation processes, creating delays and additional costs. Integrated digital payment networks aim to reduce these friction points by enabling quicker transaction processing and automated reconciliation.

The partnerships are also expected to support enterprise customers receiving payments from overseas clients and business partners.





India's Export Engine Holds Firm as Services and Engineering Shipments Strengthen

India's export sector is maintaining momentum as services and engineered goods record steady sequential growth. Strong demand for IT, business services, machinery, automobiles, and electronics is supporting export performance. Meanwhile, softer global crude prices are helping reduce import costs and narrow the merchandise trade deficit. Despite geopolitical and trade challenges, diversification and manufacturing investments are strengthening India's position in global markets.

India's export sector is showing resilience as services and engineered goods exports maintain positive sequential growth, helping narrow the country's merchandise trade deficit. The improvement comes amid softer global crude oil prices, which are reducing the import bill and providing additional support to India's external trade position.

Services exports remain a crucial pillar of India's trade performance. Information technology, business-process services, professional consulting, financial services, and other digitally delivered offerings continue to generate strong overseas demand. Indian companies are increasingly expanding their global presence, serving customers across North America, Europe, Asia, and other major markets.

Engineering and manufactured goods are also contributing to the export momentum. Demand for machinery, industrial equipment, automobiles, auto components, electronics, and other engineered products is helping Indian manufacturers strengthen their position in international markets. The trend reflects ongoing efforts by companies to diversify export destinations and move toward higher-value products.

A particularly important factor supporting the trade balance is the decline in global crude prices. Since India imports a substantial portion of its crude oil requirements, lower energy prices can reduce the value of petroleum imports and ease pressure on the overall merchandise trade deficit. This provides greater stability to the country's external accounts, particularly when global demand remains uncertain.

Exporters, however, continue to face challenges from geopolitical tensions, changing trade policies, currency fluctuations, and uneven economic growth across major markets. Rising competition from other manufacturing economies is also encouraging Indian businesses to focus on productivity, technology adoption, quality standards, and cost efficiency.

Government initiatives supporting domestic manufacturing and export competitiveness are expected to remain important. Production-linked incentives, infrastructure improvements, logistics modernization, and efforts to simplify trade procedures are helping companies build stronger global supply chains.

The combination of resilient services exports, improving engineering shipments, and lower energy import costs provides a relatively favorable backdrop for India's external sector. If global demand remains stable and commodity prices stay manageable, exporters could sustain momentum in the months ahead.

India's export performance increasingly reflects a broader shift toward a more diversified trade economy. While services continue to provide a major competitive advantage, strengthening engineering and manufactured-goods exports could further improve the country's ability to participate in global value chains. The latest trend therefore offers cautious optimism for India's trade outlook. Sustained export growth, combined with controlled import costs, could help support the rupee, strengthen external stability, and contribute to broader economic growth. As businesses continue investing in technology, manufacturing capacity, and international market expansion, India's export sector is positioned to remain an important driver of the economy.



India's Fintechs Build Faster Cross-Border Payment Rails Across Southeast Asia



India's UPI ecosystem continues to expand rapidly, with digital payment volumes maintaining strong monthly growth. Wider adoption of merchant soundboxes is improving transaction visibility, while integration of credit lines is broadening access to digital payments.

Indian payment providers are partnering with Southeast Asian gateways to enable faster enterprise remittances and SME trade settlements. These integrations aim to reduce transaction delays, simplify currency conversion, improve reconciliation, and strengthen India's participation in regional digital commerce through seamless, scalable cross-border payment infrastructure.

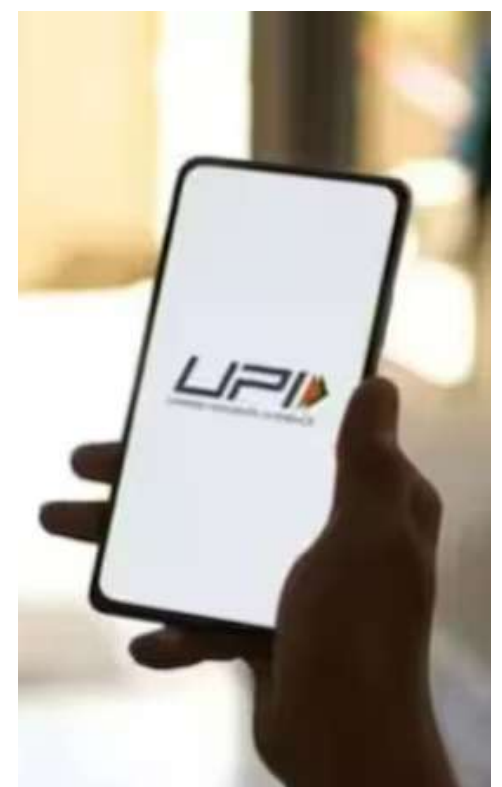
Indian payment service providers are strengthening their international presence by partnering with Southeast Asian payment gateways to simplify cross-border transactions for enterprises and small businesses. These collaborations are focused on enabling faster inward remittances and more efficient trade settlements, reducing the delays and complexities traditionally associated with international payments. The growing integration between Indian and Southeast Asian payment networks comes as businesses increasingly seek real-time financial infrastructure. SMEs engaged in regional trade often face challenges involving multiple intermediaries, currency conversions, compliance requirements, and lengthy settlement cycles. Digital payment connectivity can help reduce these friction points while improving transaction visibility and reconciliation. For Indian exporters and technology companies, faster settlement can provide an important working-capital advantage. Businesses receiving payments from overseas customers can potentially access funds more quickly, allowing them to manage supplier payments, payroll, inventory, and other operating expenses with

greater flexibility.

Southeast Asia represents an attractive market for Indian fintech companies because of its rapidly expanding digital economy and growing adoption of electronic payments. Partnerships with established local gateways can provide Indian providers with access to regional payment infrastructure while helping them navigate market-specific regulatory and operational requirements. The opportunity extends beyond simple payment processing. Fintech companies could eventually offer foreign-exchange services, automated reconciliation, compliance tools, invoicing solutions, and embedded financial products to businesses operating across borders. Such services could create additional revenue streams while making international commerce more seamless.

However, expansion across multiple jurisdictions requires careful attention to regulations, data protection, anti-money-laundering requirements, and foreign-exchange rules. Maintaining secure systems and reliable transaction monitoring will remain critical as payment volumes increase.

The emergence of stronger India–Southeast Asia payment corridors could ultimately support regional trade and deepen commercial relationships. For Indian fintechs, the focus is increasingly shifting from domestic digital payments toward building scalable financial infrastructure capable of supporting global businesses and cross-border commerce.



ECONOMY

RBI's Balancing Act: Steering Liquidity While Powering India's Investment Cycle

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is navigating a delicate monetary policy environment as it seeks to maintain price stability while ensuring that financial conditions remain supportive of India's broader economic expansion. At the heart of this approach is a careful balance between managing system liquidity, keeping inflation expectations anchored and creating an environment where businesses can continue investing in productive capacity.

India's economic growth is increasingly being supported by manufacturing, infrastructure and private-sector capital expenditure. Companies across sectors are stepping up investments in new facilities, technology, equipment and supply-chain capabilities. This manufacturing-led investment cycle is important for generating employment, strengthening domestic production and reducing dependence on imports. However, sustained investment also requires access to credit at reasonable costs, making liquidity management an important component of the RBI's broader monetary strategy.

The central bank's liquidity operations therefore play a crucial role. By managing liquidity in the banking system, the RBI can influence short-term interest rates and ensure that monetary transmission remains aligned with its broader policy objectives. Excess liquidity can potentially add to inflationary pressures, while excessively tight conditions can increase borrowing costs and discourage investment. The challenge is to maintain sufficient liquidity without allowing financial conditions to become a source of persistent price pressure.

Inflation remains a key consideration in this balancing act. The RBI has been focused on maintaining a sustainable path for inflation, particularly core inflation, which excludes volatile food and fuel components. A stable core inflation environment provides greater confidence for businesses when making long-term investment decisions. When companies can better anticipate financing costs and consumer demand, they are more willing to commit capital to expansion projects.

At the same time, the RBI must remain responsive to changes in global economic conditions. Shifts in global interest rates, commodity prices, currency movements and international capital flows can influence India's domestic financial environment. A calibrated approach to liquidity allows the central bank to respond to these external developments while keeping domestic economic priorities in focus.

For the manufacturing sector, the implications are significant. Capital-intensive industries such as electronics, automobiles, renewable energy, engineering and industrial equipment depend heavily on financing availability. A stable monetary environment can encourage companies to move ahead with capacity expansion and modernization plans. It can also support smaller suppliers and MSMEs that form an important part of India's manufacturing ecosystem.

The RBI's approach is therefore not simply about controlling inflation or adjusting interest rates. It is increasingly about maintaining the financial conditions necessary for sustainable growth without compromising macroeconomic stability. By carefully calibrating liquidity, the central bank can help ensure that credit continues to flow toward productive economic activity.

India's next phase of growth will depend substantially on whether the current investment momentum can broaden and become more durable. Manufacturing capacity, infrastructure development and private-sector investment will remain central to that process. The RBI's monetary stance will consequently play an important supporting role—providing stability, managing inflation risks and allowing the economy to pursue growth without creating excessive financial imbalances.



As Climate Risks Mount Across South Asia, India's Most Innovative Corporate Gifting Company takes a step towards Conscious Procurement with Eco Vadis Gold



The Eco Vadis assessment is a rigorous process that looks beyond claims to how sustainability is embedded across an organisation's practices and value chain. Going through that process gave us an opportunity to benchmark ourselves, strengthen our systems and demonstrate our commitment to responsible business.

Consortium Gifts earns EcoVadis Gold, placing it among the top 5% globally, for sustainable procurement, ESG and responsible corporate gifting.

With the ongoing situations, the environmental threat that looms large in South Asia is not just a phenomenon captured in climate studies, but something that affects our immediate environment. Recent floods in Nepal serve as a reminder of the effects of ever-changing weather patterns on many people. Abnormal rainfall, melting of glaciers, and irregularity in the monsoon cause the formation of large amounts of water that move downstream towards the plains of Bihar. The floods, displacement, and destruction caused by agriculture are annual occurrences in Bihar. Such an extreme weather situation is caused by climate change happening all over the world due to excessive consumption, carbon dioxide emissions, and industrial waste. With the rivers overflowing and the ecosystem deteriorating, it becomes necessary to realise the role of one's actions in causing such an effect on the environment.

High Environmental Impact of the Festive Season in India

India is full of celebration during the festive season and has deep-rooted traditions associated with it. During this season, corporate gifting, which is estimated to have an annual market size of more than ₹18,000 crore, plays a very important role in terms of expressing gratitude from corporations towards their employees, clients, and business partners through millions of thank-you notes. However, there is a very high environmental cost associated with this activity.

During the festive season, municipal solid waste generation increases by 25% during the peak weeks of festivities. This increase is caused by one-time-use plastic packaging, non-recyclable wrappers of gifts, thermocol inserts, and temporary decorations, which will end up in landfills after just a few days of use. Moreover, since more than 80% of a company's carbon footprint comes from Scope 3 emissions from its supply chain, the festive season gifting cannot be regarded as an isolated and regular activity anymore. **Why Sustainable Gifting Requires Circular Procurement?**

With the increasing emphasis on sustainable practices in relation to ESG guidelines and the mandatory BRSR reporting requirement, many companies in India are beginning to re-examine their practices of corporate gifting. However, one significant challenge remains greenwashing. The practice of placing an "eco-friendly" label on the gift does not count when the gift is packed in multiple layers of non-biodegradable plastics, produced using excessive amounts of energy or delivered using logistics that are ecologically harmful.

For true sustainability to be achieved, it is important to assess the entire value chain. A sustainable gift should include the consideration of resource utilization, lifecycle of the product, packaging material, labour standards, and ethics of the supplier. According to the global research done by Eco vadis, 58% of procurement executives of enterprises have implemented formal sustainability programs within their supply chains. This clearly indicates the paradigm shift, as corporations are no longer considering merely one of the items on the catalogue.

MSME Credit Gets a Green Boost as CGTMSE Expands Support for New Manufacturers

India's small and medium enterprise sector could receive a significant financing boost as the government strengthens credit guarantee support for businesses investing in new manufacturing capabilities. The move is aimed at improving access to collateral-free institutional credit while encouraging entrepreneurs to establish innovative and environmentally sustainable manufacturing ventures.

Under the expanded framework associated with the Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE), greater credit support can help reduce one of the biggest barriers faced by smaller businesses: the need to provide substantial collateral when seeking loans. Easier access to guaranteed credit can allow eligible enterprises to invest in machinery, technology, production facilities and other essential assets without placing excessive pressure on their existing balance sheets.

A major focus is the growing green manufacturing ecosystem. Entrepreneurs developing energy-efficient technologies, cleaner production systems and sustainable industrial solutions require significant upfront capital. Improved credit access can help such ventures move from early-stage concepts to commercial-scale operations more quickly. The emphasis on digital approvals and streamlined processes could further reduce administrative delays. Faster processing can



improve the overall borrowing experience for MSMEs, particularly first-time entrepreneurs who may otherwise struggle with complex documentation and lengthy financing procedures.

The initiative also aligns with India's broader objective of strengthening domestic manufacturing and expanding the contribution of MSMEs to economic growth. By combining credit guarantees with easier digital access, policymakers are seeking to encourage investment, innovation and job creation.

India's DeepTech Push: New Incentives Aim to Accelerate Homegrown Innovation

India is strengthening its DeepTech ecosystem with increased policy support aimed at helping startups, research institutions and emerging technology companies develop and commercialise indigenous intellectual property. The expanded focus on patent reimbursements and incubator support is designed to accelerate innovation in strategically important areas such as semiconductors, robotics and advanced engineering.

For DeepTech startups, securing patents can be expensive and time-consuming, particularly during the early stages of product development. Expanded institutional support for patent filing can reduce these financial barriers and encourage innovators to formally protect technologies developed through years of research and experimentation. Stronger domestic intellectual property can also improve the ability of Indian startups to attract investors, establish licensing opportunities and compete in international markets.

Incubators are expected to play an equally important role. Additional grants can strengthen facilities that provide startups with laboratories, technical expertise, prototyping resources and industry connections. Such infrastructure is particularly valuable for semiconductor and robotics ventures, where developing a commercially viable product

often requires substantial capital and specialised equipment before revenue begins. The initiative also reflects India's broader ambition to build technological capabilities within the country rather than relying heavily on imported technologies. Semiconductor design, robotics, automation and other advanced technology fields are increasingly linked to economic competitiveness and strategic resilience.

By combining financial assistance for intellectual property creation with stronger incubation infrastructure, policymakers are seeking to shorten the journey from research to market.



PM Vishwakarma's Digital Push Opens New Credit Pathways for India's Artisans

India's traditional artisans and micro-entrepreneurs are gaining stronger opportunities to modernise their businesses as the PM Vishwakarma programme advances its skill-development and digital support initiatives. The completion of second-phase skill certifications is helping eligible beneficiaries move closer to accessing institutional finance designed to support business expansion and modernisation.

The programme focuses on strengthening the capabilities of artisans across a range of traditional trades while improving their access to tools, technology and formal financial services. Skill certification can help beneficiaries demonstrate their capabilities and meet eligibility requirements for further support under the scheme.



For many small artisans, limited access to affordable capital remains a major obstacle to upgrading equipment, improving productivity or expanding their customer base. Low-interest credit can help address this gap by enabling entrepreneurs to invest in better tools, machinery, raw materials and other business requirements without relying heavily on informal borrowing.

The digitalisation of programme processes is also expected to make government support more accessible. Online systems can improve transparency, simplify applications and help beneficiaries track different stages of assistance.

The broader objective is to bring traditional enterprises into India's growing formal economy while preserving skilled craftsmanship. By combining training, digital access and affordable finance, PM Vishwakarma can help artisans transform established skills into sustainable micro-businesses.

For India's artisan economy, the initiative represents a shift from short-term assistance toward skills, productivity, formal credit and long-term enterprise growth.

SPORTS

India Takes Sports Science to the Next Level With Biomechanical Tracking for Athletes



India is integrating wearable sensors and biomechanical tracking into athlete training, using data-driven insights to improve conditioning, performance, recovery and injury prevention.

India is moving to bring advanced sports technology closer to its elite athletes as the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports explores greater collaboration with athletic-wear companies and wearable-sensor startups. The initiative around the National Games aims to integrate biomechanical tracking into athlete conditioning, creating a more data-driven approach to training, performance monitoring and injury prevention.

Biomechanical technology uses sensors and motion-tracking systems to capture detailed information about how an athlete moves. Metrics related to movement patterns, acceleration, balance, joint positioning, stride mechanics and workload can help coaches understand performance beyond what can be observed during conventional training sessions.

For Indian athletes, the adoption of these technologies could mark an important shift in sports preparation. Traditionally, conditioning programmes have relied heavily on coaches' observations, physical assessments and standard performance measurements. Wearable sensors can complement these methods by providing continuous, objective data that can be analysed over time.

The technology could be particularly valuable for identifying movement inefficiencies. Small changes in an athlete's running technique, posture or load distribution may affect performance and potentially increase injury risk. By detecting such patterns earlier, coaches and sports scientists can adjust training programmes and recovery schedules according to an individual athlete's requirements.

The participation of athletic-wear startups could also encourage innovation in sports equipment. Smart apparel, sensor-enabled footwear and connected training accessories can potentially collect performance information without significantly disrupting an

athlete's normal routine. Startups developing these solutions could gain opportunities to test their technologies in high-performance sporting environments while receiving valuable feedback from athletes and coaches.

Data generated through wearable systems can also support personalised conditioning. Instead of applying identical training loads across an entire squad, coaches can use performance trends to understand how individual athletes respond to training. This approach can help optimise workloads, recovery periods and conditioning plans.

The initiative reflects a broader global movement toward sports technology, where data analytics, artificial intelligence and wearable devices are becoming increasingly important components of elite performance. Countries with advanced sporting ecosystems are already using technology to analyse movement, manage workloads and improve athlete preparation.

For India, integrating such systems into the National Games could provide an opportunity to build stronger links between athletes, coaches, sports scientists, technology startups and research institutions. It could also help create a domestic market for sports-tech solutions designed specifically around Indian athletes and sporting conditions.

However, effective implementation will require more than simply deploying sensors. Coaches and sports professionals will need appropriate training to interpret the data, while athlete privacy and responsible handling of performance information will remain important considerations.

The larger objective is to make sports preparation more scientific, personalised and evidence-driven.

Oil Prices Ease as Supply Expands and EV Adoption Reshapes Global Energy Demand



Oil prices are easing as non-OPEC supply rises and EV adoption grows, potentially lowering import costs, easing inflation and supporting economic stability across emerging markets.

Global crude oil markets are experiencing softer price conditions as rising production outside the OPEC group combines with accelerating electric vehicle adoption to reshape expectations for future energy demand. Brent crude trading below the \$72-per-barrel mark is providing some relief to major oil-importing economies, particularly emerging markets that remain sensitive to international energy prices.

Higher non-OPEC production has contributed to increased global supply, adding competitive pressure to crude prices. Producers in regions outside the traditional OPEC framework have expanded output, supported by investments in new production capacity and improved extraction technologies. The additional supply has given buyers greater flexibility and reduced some concerns over potential shortages.

At the same time, the rapid expansion of electric vehicle fleets is gradually changing the structure of global oil consumption. EV adoption is particularly significant for the transportation sector, which represents one of the largest sources of petroleum demand worldwide. As more consumers and businesses shift toward electric cars, buses and commercial vehicles, long-term expectations for gasoline and diesel consumption are being reassessed.

For emerging markets, lower crude prices can have meaningful economic benefits. Countries that import a large

share of their energy requirements may experience reduced fuel-import bills when international oil prices decline. This can help ease pressure on current-account balances and reduce the cost burden associated with transportation and industrial activity.

India, as one of the world's major crude oil importers, could particularly benefit from a sustained period of moderate oil prices. Lower input costs can support fuel-sensitive sectors such as logistics, aviation, manufacturing and transportation. They can also reduce some inflationary pressure by limiting the impact of energy costs on businesses and consumers.

However, the outlook for crude prices remains subject to several uncertainties.

Geopolitical developments, changes in global economic growth, production decisions by major oil exporters and unexpected disruptions can quickly alter supply-demand conditions.

The growing EV market represents a longer-term structural change rather than an immediate replacement for conventional vehicles.

Internal-combustion vehicles will continue to account for a substantial portion of global transportation demand for years, while emerging economies are likely to maintain significant oil requirements.

Key Highlights

- Brent crude has softened below \$72 per barrel amid changing global supply-demand dynamics.
- Rising non-OPEC production is adding to worldwide crude availability.
- Faster EV adoption is expected to gradually reduce oil demand from road transportation.
- Lower crude prices can reduce fuel-import bills for emerging economies.
- India could benefit through lower energy costs and reduced inflationary pressure.
- Cheaper oil may support manufacturing, logistics, aviation and transportation sectors.
- Geopolitical tensions and production decisions remain key risks to the price outlook.