

# Commercial LPG, 5-kg cylinders to cost more

Price of commercial LPG hiked by ₹993 a cylinder and that of 5-kg cylinder by ₹261; price of ATF for international carriers raised; govt. also reduces excise duty on export of diesel, aviation fuel

Saptaparno Ghosh

NEW DELHI

Oil marketing companies (OMCs) on Friday sharply hiked the price of commercial LPG by ₹993 per cylinder and that of 5-kg free trade LPG by ₹261 per cylinder. Further, the price of bulk diesel was raised from ₹137 to ₹149 per litre.

Whilst the OMCs did not hike the price of LPG meant for domestic usage and that of aviation turbine fuel (ATF) for domestic scheduled carriers, the price of ATF for international airlines has been pushed up by ₹76.55 per kilolitre from \$1,435 per kilolitre.

The prices of retail petrol and diesel are



**Fuel crisis:** Commercial LPG cylinder delivery workers unload cylinders from a truck at a distribution centre. J. ALLEN EGENUSE

Ministry of Finance reduced the excise duty on the export of diesel to ₹23 for every litre from ₹55.5 per litre and that of ATF to ₹33 per litre from ₹42 per litre, whilst the special additional excise duty (SAED) on the export of petrol

the excise duties on the export of diesel and ATF was done on April 11. The government said that the earlier upward revisions were to ensure the availability of these products in the domestic market and cushion against any impact on cur

## Congress slams government on hike in LPG rates

NEW DELHI

The Congress on Friday slammed the Narendra Modi government over the latest price hike for commercial LPG cylinders, with Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi calling it the “bill for elections”. » PAGE 9

change in that stance.

Whilst the prices of domestic LPG being unchanged offer respite, the steep hike in prices of commercial LPG and that of 5-kg free trade LPG raise concerns.

# Commercial LPG, 5-kg cylinders to cost more

The latter primarily caters to the needs of migrant populations in urban and semi-urban areas who do not have a local address proof to avail a regular connection. Commercial LPG is used by businesses, both big and small, on a daily basis. Key among these are restaurants and hotels. Higher costs are expected to be passed on to their customers.

According to government estimates, 5-kg cylinders comprising more than 22.54 lakh kg of LPG were sold in April. The price of the smaller cylinder was last hiked by ₹51 per cylinder in April. It was on April 7 that the government had also doubled the allocation of the cylinders in all States.

The hike in commercial LPG prices follows a ₹195.5 per cylinder hike on April 1, when the crisis in West Asia had completed a full month.

# Cong. slams govt. on hike in commercial LPG price

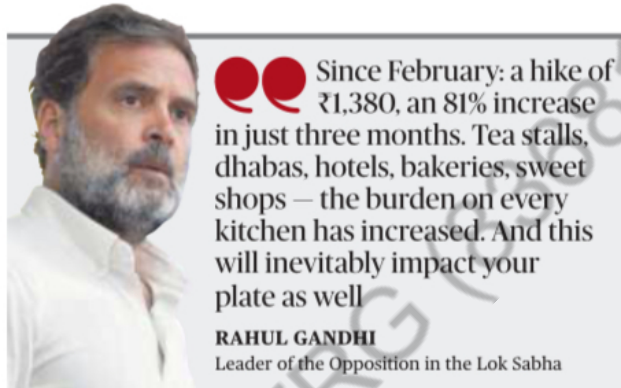
Rahul Gandhi calls the latest increase 'bill for elections'; K.C. Venugopal says hike will affect 'crores of Indians who rely on small eateries'; Kharge hits out at Modi govt. on International Labour Day

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Friday slammed the Narendra Modi government over the latest price hike for commercial LPG cylinders, with Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi calling it the "bill for elections".

Attacking the steep increase in commercial LPG prices, Mr. Gandhi said the hike – the largest ever in a single day – was proof that the burden of inflation would intensify after elections. "Today, commercial gas cylinders have become ₹993 more expensive. This marks the single largest hike in a single day. This is an election bill," Mr. Gandhi said in a post on X, warning that petrol and diesel prices could be next.

He noted that commercial LPG prices had risen sharply in recent months. "Since February: a hike of ₹1,380, an 81% increase in just three months. Tea stalls, dhabas, hotels, bakeries, sweet shops – the burden on every kitchen has increased. And this will



inevitably impact your plate as well," the Opposition leader added.

The price of a 19-kg commercial LPG cylinder – used by hotels and restaurants – was raised by ₹993 to ₹3,071.5 (in Delhi). Rates had earlier been hiked by ₹195.5 on April 1 and ₹114.5 on March 1.

## 'Election over'

Congress general secretary K.C. Venugopal said the timing of the hike showed the government's "disregard" for ordinary citizens. "Just as the election cycle concluded, the Modi government wasted no time to increase prices of LPG cylinders. A whopping increase of nearly ₹1,000 on commercial cylinders will

affect crores of Indians who rely on food from small eateries for sustenance. Similarly, crores of small food businesses will have to bear the burden of this hike," Mr. Venugopal said.

Mr. Gandhi had earlier alleged that the government had "profiteered" when global crude prices were low and would now shift the burden to the public as prices rise.

## Anti-labour policies

Meanwhile, on International Labour Day, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge accused the government of pursuing policies detrimental to workers and demanded a review of the new labour

codes. "Driven by the 'Hum Do, Hamare Do' policy, the Modi government implemented an anti-worker Labour Code. As a result, unrest has erupted everywhere – be it in Noida, at the IOCL facility in Panipat, Adani's factory in Raikhedra, NTPC Patratu, or the Samsung factory in Sriperumbudur," the Congress chief posted on X.

He alleged that the new labour framework promoted "contractualisation" and "hire and fire" practices while weakening job security. The Congress chief also called for reviving the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and introducing a national minimum wage of ₹400 per day.

Claiming that wages had stagnated and unemployment had risen, Mr. Kharge said nearly 69% of workers earned below the statutory minimum wage and the government had failed to fill about 30 lakh vacancies. He also reiterated demands for universal health coverage for workers and insurance for those in the unorganised sector.



## Sixth Nilgiri-class frigate joins fleet, boosting naval power

The Indian Navy on Thursday, took delivery of *Mahendragiri* (Yard 12654), the sixth ship of the Nilgiri-class (Project 17A) and the fourth constructed by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited in Mumbai. According to Indian Navy, the delivery marks a major milestone in India's push for self-reliance in warship design and construction. Project 17A frigates are advanced multi-mission platforms built to tackle evolving maritime challenges. Designed by the Warship Design Bureau, the ships represent a significant leap in stealth, firepower, automation, and survivability, reinforcing India's indigenous defence capabilities, it further added.

# SC grants anticipatory bail to Congress leader in case filed by Assam CM's wife

**Krishnadas Rajagopal**

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has granted Congress leader Pawan Khera anticipatory bail in a criminal case instituted on a complaint filed by Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's wife, saying the case appears to be motivated by political rivalry and does not warrant custodial interrogation.

A Bench headed by Justice J.K. Maheshwari cautioned the State of Assam against using the power to arrest so casually, as if to strike a blow at a political rival. The 22-page order said the right to personal liberty cannot be jeopardised lightly. The order was published on May 1.

“Criminal process must be applied with objectivity and circumspection so as to ensure that individual liberty is not imperiled by proceedings that may be coloured by political rivalry. We are further of the opinion that the allegations and counter-allegations, as apparent in the present case, prima facie, appear to be politically motivated and seemingly influenced by such rivalry, rather than disclosing a situation warranting custodial interrogation, and the veracity of the allegations can be tested at trial,” the Supreme Court Bench, also comprising Justice Atul S. Chandurkar, observed in the order.

The court said shackling a cherished fundamental



Pawan Khera

right like personal liberty should be justified at a higher threshold than what seemed to be political rivalry.

Mr. Khera had accused Mr. Sarma's wife, Riniki Bhuyan Sharma, of holding three passports of Egypt, the UAE, and Antigua and Barbuda. He had stated that two of these nations were “Muslim coun-

tries, however, the husband's politics is based on hatred against the Muslim community in the State”.

He had also exhibited documents stating that she had a company registered in the U.S. with an investment of more than ₹50,000 crores, besides owning assets in Dubai.

Mr. Khera had stated that Mr. Sarma's election affidavit had not disclosed any of these details of wealth.

The FIR was registered by the Assam Police after Ms. Sharma denied the veracity of these documents and stated that they were fabricated with forged seals and QR codes.

**CONTINUED ON**

» **PAGE 8**

# **SC grants anticipatory bail to Pawan Khera**

Mr. Khera was booked for conspiracy, forgery and criminal defamation.

Through senior advocate A.M. Singhvi, he said the FIR was driven by an ulterior political motive and was intended to humiliate him with his arrest.

The court said *prima facie* it seemed Mr. Khera's statements were designed to gain "some political momentum in favour of his party". On the other hand, the court highlighted that it could not "lose sight of the fact that the Chief Minister of the State, who is also the husband of the complainant, has made certain unparliamentary remarks against the appellant in various press statements which have been filed before this court". The Bench ordered that Mr. Khera would be released on anticipatory bail in the event of his arrest.

# 'No relocation of tribes': Centre responds to Rahul's attack on Great Nicobar project

**Nikhil Ghanekar**  
*New Delhi, May 1*

TWO DAYS after Rahul Gandhi, the Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, called the Rs 81,000-crore Great Nicobar mega infrastructure project as "one of the biggest scams" and "gravest crime" against India's natural and tribal heritage, the Union Government issued a lengthy factsheet on 'environmental impact assessment', tribal welfare, while laying out the project's 'strategic maritime' and 'defence' purpose.

The government also claimed that Nicobarese and Shompen habitations on the island will not be displaced, and 'no relocation' of the communities is proposed.

The government fact-sheet, while not explicitly defending the project against Gandhi's charge, sought to underline that the project has been

granted prior environmental clearance after a detailed process, and includes 42 specific conditions on environmental protection.

It said that the project leverages the island's strategic location "to strengthen India's national security, maritime and defence presence in the Indo-Pacific, while simultaneously embedding environmental safeguards and tribal welfare mechanisms."

The mega project will see the construction of a transshipment port, an integrated township, a civil and military use airport, and a 450-MVA gas and solar power-based plant.

It requires a total area of 166.10 sq km, including 35.35 sq km of revenue land and 130.75 sq km of forest land, including felling of a million trees in the tropical evergreen and semi-evergreen forests. The government release said that the esti-

mated number of trees in this (project) area is 18.65 lakh, though the maximum number expected to be felled is 7.11 lakh within 49.86 sq km of forest.

"The tree felling will be carried out in a phased manner in line with the proposed phase-wise development of the key projects. Importantly, 65.99 sq km of land will be preserved as green zones with no tree felling, ensuring ecological balance," the government stated.

Gandhi was on a three-day visit to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and on the third day, April 28, he visited the Great Nicobar Island, and interacted with leaders from the indigenous Nicobarese community and settlers who belong to the ex-servicemen community.

After visiting forests on the Island, Gandhi said in an X post that "Millions of trees are marked for the axe." He added, "This is not development. This

is destruction dressed in development's language... what is being done in Great Nicobar is one of the biggest scams and gravest crimes against this country's natural and tribal heritage in our lifetime."

On tribal welfare, the government release said that the project has been "carefully designed" to ensure that the Nicobarese and Shompen tribes are not displaced.

"Out of the 166.10 sq km that is proposed for development projects, 84.10 sq km overlaps with the Tribal Reserve. However, within this portion, 11.032 sq km has already been settled and used as revenue land since 1972. Consequently, the effectively remaining area measuring 73.07 sq km is being de-notified for project purposes. To compensate, 76.98 sq km is being re-notified as a tribal reserve, resulting in a net ad-

# SC to hear today TMC plea against EC directive on counting supervisors

Express News Service  
New Delhi, May 1

THE SUPREME Court will hear on Saturday a plea filed by Trinamool Congress (TMC) challenging a Calcutta High Court order that dismissed a petition against the Election Commission of India decision to deploy Central government and PSU employees as counting supervisors and assistants for counting the votes on May 4.

A bench of Justices PV Narasimha and Joymalya Bagchi will hear the TMC appeal challenging the April 30 Calcutta High Court order.

The party had challenged a communication issued by the additional chief electoral officer on April 30 mandating that at least one among the counting supervisors or counting assistants at each counting table be a Central government or Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) employee.

The TMC had argued that it was issued without any jurisdiction. The party also contended that the Election Commission has not made any such arrangement in four other states which also went to polls along with Bengal.

Rejecting the TMC plea, the HC had said: "It is the pre-



Police and security personnel stand guard outside a strong room in Kolkata's Bhabanipur on Friday. PTI

rogative of the office of the Election Commission of India to appoint the counting supervisor and counting assistant either from the state government or the Central government. This court does not find any illegality..."

The High Court noted that counting is conducted under CCTV surveillance and that apart from the counting supervisor and the counting assistant, micro-

observers, counting agents of the candidates contesting the elec-

tion and counting personnel will also be in the counting room.

"Only the counting supervisor and the counting assistants will not be in the counting room. Micro-observers, counting agents of the candidates who are contesting the election and counting personnel will also be in the counting room. Thus, it is impossible to believe the allegation made by the petitioner," the HC said.

It, however, made it clear that if any malpractice occurs



Repolling today in 15 booths of two seats

Atri Mitra  
Kolkata, May 1

THE ELECTION Commission of India (ECI) has ordered repolling at 15 booths in South 24 Parganas' constituencies of Magrahat-Paschim and Diamond Harbour on Saturday. The decision was taken on the basis of reports submitted by presiding officers.

ECI Secretary Sujeet Kumar Misra wrote to West Bengal Chief Electoral Officer Manoj Kumar Aggarwal, stating, "I am directed to state that on the basis of reports received from the concerned Returning Officers and the Observers... and after taking all material circumstances into account, the Commission hereby declares... that the poll taken on 29 April, 2026 for the aforesaid election at the following Polling Stations to be void and appoints May 2, 2026 as the date."

The letter listed 15 booths, of which 11 are in Magrahat-Paschim and four in Diamond Harbour.

during the counting, the petitioner would be at liberty to challenge the same in an election petition.

"If the petitioner finds that during the counting, the Central government employees who have been appointed as counting supervisors and counting assistants favoured the candidate of the BJP..., the petitioner has the liberty to challenge the same in an election petition," the HC had said.

Polling for the 294-member Bengal Assembly was held in two phases on April 23 and April 29, with the counting of votes scheduled for May 4.

# Dhaka, Delhi move to resume full-scale visa operations

Efforts for India-Bangladesh political engagements currently underway

## • Visas for Indians to Bangladesh

<b>E.</b>	<b>2024</b>	Delhi 69,684	Kolkata 72,265	Agartala 99,941
	<b>2025</b>	Delhi 63,380	Kolkata 43,048	Agartala 27,946
	<b>2026</b>	Delhi 5,197	Kolkata 3,557	Agartala 9,462

SOURCE: BANGLADESH HIGH COMMISSION

**Divya A**

*New Delhi, May 1*

**MOVING TO** normalise ties after months of turmoil in the recent past, Delhi and Dhaka are taking the first step forward with full-scale resumption of visa services. While Bangladesh has resumed visas for Indian citizens across all categories, India is aiming at gradual resumption of visa operations over the next few weeks, *The*

*Indian Express* has learnt.

When Bangladesh Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman was in India last month, visa normalisation was among the key points raised by Dhaka. While all Bangladesh visa centres in India, including the High Commission in New Delhi and consular divisions in Kolkata, Agartala, Mumbai and Chennai, are now functional, Dhaka has sought early reciprocation by

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

# Visa operations

Delhi on the visa issue.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Bangladesh High Commissioner Riaz Hamidullah said, "After the visa operations at some of our centres had to be held in abeyance in December last year, they were restored in February."

In February, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri visited Dhaka as part of the Indian delegation led by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to attend the swearing-in of Prime Minister Tarique Rahman.

From the time the new BNP government has taken charge, Delhi and Dhaka have been taking steps to recalibrate ties strained by the hostility of the interim administration led by Muhammad Yunus following the ouster of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in August 2024.

Once visa processes on both sides are normalised, Delhi and Dhaka will look at other points of convergence including economic ties and energy connectivity. High-level political engagements, sources said, could also be worked out in the coming weeks.

Recently, India transported diesel to Bangladesh to alleviate its energy shortage in the wake of the West Asia war.

Government sources in New

Delhi said though the visa services for Bangladesh citizens were severely hit in the wake of security concerns that emerged last year, these were never completely shut down. "Considerations were made on a case-to-case basis, especially for those dealing with medical or family emergencies."

Efforts are underway for Indian visa operations to gradually resume, the sources said.

As per estimates, visa services for Bangladeshi nationals to visit India are presently working at around 15-20% of the pre-December 2025 capacity, and medical/family visas are being prioritised over other categories.

With new Indian High Commissioner Dinesh Trivedi taking over soon, it is expected that full-scale resumption of visa services will be effected soon by India.

According to figures provided by the Bangladesh High Commission to *The Indian Express*, over 13,000 visas have been issued to Indian citizens over the last two months since the operations were resumed around February 20. These include various categories: business, tourism, medical and for those wanting to travel across the border to meet family members.

# Abu Dhabi exits OPEC for an ascent of 'peak oil'

Although in recent years the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has frequently threatened to leave the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), its actual announcement, on April 28, took observers by surprise. It was also conspicuous in its context. It provided only three days' notice for exit from OPEC and OPEC+ on May 1, just five days before the next OPEC meeting. The decision was also counterintuitive to the ongoing double blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, staunching oil exports of the UAE and other Gulf states.

A subsequent Emirati official statement was elaborate but elliptical. It sought to both rationalise the decision aimed at pursuing national interest and reassure the stakeholders of its continued intention "to contribute to stability (of the oil market) in a measured and responsible manner", promising "to bring additional production to market in a gradual and measured manner".

These anodyne references prompt the analysts to look deeper to fathom the real reasons for the Emirati step and assess its impact on the global market.

## The UAE's grouse

The UAE's oil and gas reserves, estimated at 113 billion barrels, are the world's sixth largest. These are almost exclusively in the Abu Dhabi emirate. The UAE has a \$150 billion investment plan (2023-27) to raise its oil production capacity to five million barrels per day (mbpd). However, its OPEC production quota is limited to 3.45 mbpd, leaving it with nearly 1.5 mbpd unutilised spare capacity. This has been a source of the UAE's grouse against OPEC, which is perceived to operate under Saudi hegemony. Riyadh, as OPEC's 'swing producer', often trims its oil



**Mahesh Sachdev**

Retired Indian Ambassador with an interest in West Asia and oil matters

The UAE's exit marks a potential turning point for global oil governance

production to absorb the global oil glut; it resists Abu Dhabi's pressure for a larger OPEC quota.

The UAE's ambitious plans for a post-oil advanced technologies-based economy require mega-investments in Artificial Intelligence, and data centres, ironically, requiring higher oil revenues.

## War's impact

Over the long run, Emirati strategists believe that global oil demand is approaching a "Peak Oil" moment after which crude requirement and unit value would begin their decline. Consequently, they wish to sell as much oil as possible before the "Peak Oil". They contend that the Iran war brings "Peak Oil" even closer by causing an unsustainable surge in oil prices, destroying the demand and accelerating the shift towards alternative fuels. In the short run, the UAE wishes to take advantage of the current higher oil prices. With the 1.5 mbpd Abu Dhabi (Habshan)-Fujairah oil pipeline already operational outside the Strait of Hormuz, the UAE is well placed to do so. By quitting OPEC, Abu Dhabi has unfettered itself from any quota restrictions in anticipation of a scramble among the Gulf exporters for greater market share once the two blockades on the Strait of Hormuz are lifted.

The Emirati statement conspicuously omits the Gulf geopolitics, the 640-pound gorilla in the room. Iran hurled over 2,200 drones and missiles at the UAE during the war as retribution for its strategic ties with Israel. Separately, during the past decade, the barely concealed political and economic rivalry between Saudi Arabia and the UAE has reached a crescendo. It is hardly coincidental that the UAE's OPEC exit announcement was timed with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Consultative Summit,

in Jeddah, on the Iran war, where the UAE was under-represented by its Foreign Minister. The move was widely interpreted as Abu Dhabi flaunting its regional autonomy of action to the GCC states and Iran. By ditching OPEC, the UAE, apparently, aims to steal a march over Iran and Saudi Arabia, both OPEC members, for Asia's very large and thirsty crude markets. The move may also favour U.S. President Donald Trump, who desperately needs lower oil prices before the mid-term Congressional elections. At a wider ambit, this may be the opening overture of the UAE openly pursuing a more nationalistic foreign policy. Most observers believe that the exit of the UAE, OPEC's third-largest producer, would not derail the cartel, although its grip on the global market would slip further below that of independent producers, such as the U.S., Canada, Brazil, and Norway. For some, the departure of the UAE, the fifth member to leave OPEC since 2016 and the biggest producer so far, may even mark the beginning of the end for OPEC.

## An opportunity for India

While the Emiratis have their reasons for quitting OPEC, consumers in India, the world's third-largest and fastest-growing crude importer, would see it with tentative hope for lower pump prices. India enjoys strategic ties with the UAE, its third-largest trading partner and fourth-largest crude supplier. To anchor the hydrocarbon relationship with the "OPEC-free" UAE, India may propose strategic joint investments in Indian downstream projects.

For the past half a century, the OPEC dictates often made Indians shudder and issue a "May Day!" call. Thanks to the UAE quitting the producer cartel, this May could have a different ring.

# Trump 'not satisfied' with Iran's peace proposal

Stanly Johny

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Friday he was "not satisfied" with Iran's latest proposal in negotiations to end the war between the countries, rejecting the plan almost as soon as it was delivered.

Tehran delivered the new proposal for talks with the U.S. via Pakistan, which is acting as a mediator between the two sides, even as the Revolutionary Guards warned American warships "will burn" like U.S. bases in the region, if Iran is attacked again. The text of the proposal was handed to Pakistan on Thursday, state-run Islamic Republic News Agency reported on Friday.

"Ending the war and establishing a sustainable peace remain Tehran's main priorities in negotiations with the U.S.," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baqaei said in a TV interview.

"They want to make a deal, I'm not satisfied with it, so we'll see what happen," Mr. Trump told presspersons on Friday at the White House, Associated Press reported. He did not elaborate on what he saw as the latest proposal's shortcomings. "They're asking for things I can't agree to," he said.

After Mr. Trump announced a ceasefire on April 8, Pakistan hosted direct talks between Iran and the U.S. which ended without any breakthrough. After the collapse of the Islamabad talks, Mr. Trump announced a blockade of Iranian ports, which remains in place.

# Trump 'to raise' EU autos tariffs to 25%, accuses it of non-compliance with deal

**Associated Press**

WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Friday that he will increase the tariffs charged on cars and trucks from the European Union next week to 25%, a move that could jolt the world economy at a fragile moment.

Mr. Trump said in a social media post that the EU "is not complying with our fully agreed to 'Trade Deal,'" though he did not flesh out his objections in the post.

Asked by presspersons on Friday about the increase in import taxes as he departed the White House for Florida, Mr. Trump said the EU was not "as usual" adhering to last



Donald Trump and Ursula von der Leyen had agreed to a trade deal last July, which set a tariff ceiling of 15% on most goods. AFP

year's trade framework, without detailing the source of the tension. He added that he believed the shift to higher tariffs "forces them to move their factory production much faster" to the U.S.

Mr. Trump and Euro-

pean Commission President Ursula von der Leyen had agreed to the trade deal last July. It set a tariff ceiling of 15% on most goods, though the Supreme Court this year ruled against the legal authority that Mr. Trump

had used to charge that tax. This left Mr. Trump looking for substitute authorities, and his administration has imposed a 10% tax while investigating trade imbalances and national security issues to put in new tariffs to make up for lost revenues.

Both the U.S. and the EU had previously confirmed their commitment to preserving the trade framework, known as the Turnberry Agreement, which was named after Trump's golf course in Scotland.

The value of EU-U.S. trade in goods and services amounted to 1.7 trillion euros (\$2 trillion) in 2024, or an average of 4.6 billion euros a day, according to EU statistics agency Eurostat.

# GST revenue hits record ₹2.43 lakh crore in April

**T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan**

NEW DELHI

The government's Goods and Services Tax (GST) revenue in April 2026 surged to an all-time high of ₹2.43 lakh crore, up 8.7% over April last year. Growth was once again driven by collections on imports, with revenue from domestic sales growing slower.

Tax experts, however, note that collections in April, which represent activity in March, typically come in higher as both industry and the tax administration make a final push to achieve the financial year-end targets.

Data show that there has been a record collection every April ever since the GST was rolled out in 2017, except for April 2020, which was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown.

"April 2026 GST collections cap off a resilient FY26 for the GST regime,

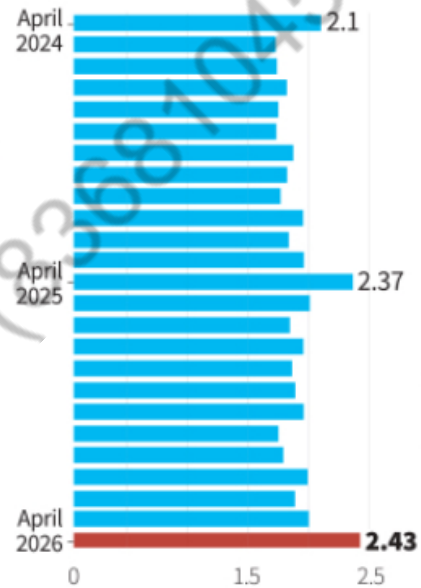
## April highs

The April GST intake reached **₹2.43 lakh crore**, marking the third consecutive year of record highs for the month



with gross revenues rising 8.7% year-on-year to about ₹2.43 lakh crore compared to April 2025, despite continued global uncertainty and West Asia-related geopolitical headwinds," Mahesh Jaising, partner & indirect tax leader at Deloitte India, said.

The data show that net collections, once refunds are accounted for, stood at **₹2.11 lakh crore in April 2026, up 7.3% over April**



SOURCE: MINISTRY OF FINANCE

last year.

Notably, the data also show that the growth in collections was once again driven by imports.

Gross collections from imports grew nearly 26% in April 2026 to ₹57,580 crore. Collections from domestic sales grew at 4.3% to ₹1.85 lakh crore in the period.

**CONTINUED ON**

**» PAGE 8**

# GST revenue hits record ₹2.43 lakh crore in April

“Post GST 2.0, a steady 7-8% monthly growth seems to be emerging as the norm which is broadly in line with budget estimates,” Pratik Jain, partner, Price Waterhouse & Co., said. “Notably, growth in import-led revenues continues to outpace domestic transactions, which could indicate some softness in consumption.”

Manoj Mishra, partner and tax controversy management leader at Grant Thornton Bharat, said that the growth in tax revenue from imports also “points to resilient external demand linkages and supply chain normalisation”.

Mr. Jaising, on the other hand, pointed out that the growth in revenues from domestic sales has remained steady, which reflects the nature of consumption activity in the economy.

That said, Saurabh Agarwal, tax partner at EY India, did warn that the coming months are not likely to replicate these record collections. “A note of caution for the quarter ahead: April’s record figures reflect the year-end push for targets by both industry and administrators,” he said. “As we transition into the new fiscal year, we should anticipate a stabilisation in the coming months.”