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Equity investors move away from export sectors

Weighting of domestic demand-driven sectors surges; 'sunrise' stocks leap ahead

KRISHNA KANT

Mumbai, 5 October

The equity markets are turning away from export-driven sectors as American President Donald Trump's policies have made exports to the US difficult for Indian companies. The combined weighting of Information Technology (IT) services and pharmaceuticals — India's two largest export-oriented sectors — in the Nifty 50 index has fallen to just 12.3 per cent, the lowest in 25 years.

By contrast, in March 2022, these sectors accounted for 22 per cent of the index. Meanwhile, domestic demand-driven sectors — including retail, food delivery services, telecom, aviation, and hospitals — have seen a sharp rise in their weightings.

These non-trade sectors now have a combined weighting of 12.9 per cent in the index, up from 4.8 per cent in March 2022 and just 2.4 per cent in March 2015. Earlier, this segment also included media firms such as Zee Entertainment and real estate developers, including DLF and Unitech.

Today, domestic demand-driven sectors are the second-heaviest segment in the index after banking, financial services and insurance (BFSI), which retains a weighting of 35.3 per cent, down marginally from 35.6 per cent at the end of March this year. BFSI's dominance has broadly been maintained, rising from an eight-year low of 30.6 per

ILLUSTRATION: BINAY SINHA



At 25-year low

Weighting of IT and pharma firms in Nifty 50 index



Source: Capitaline, Business Standard calculation

cent in March 2024. The automobile sector has also seen a rise in its index weighting amid expectations of a demand revival after the recent reduction in goods and services tax.

Turn to Sec II, P3 ▶

Business Standard, 21.06/10/22

AI boosting services exports, says World Bank economist

South Asia Chief Economist Franziska Ohnsorge flags India's low net FDI flows

VIKAS DHOOT

New Delhi, 5 October

India's computer services exports have risen 30 per cent since the advent of ChatGPT in November 2022, even as overall services exports have plateaued, World Bank's South Asia Chief Economist Franziska Ohnsorge said. She said Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the conclusion of more trade agreements, which can trigger a "manufacturing renaissance", are the two big investment opportunities for India in coming years.

Although private investments in India have slowed down since the pandemic, they are still growing faster than other developing countries, but weak net foreign direct investment (FDI) flows are a concern, Ohnsorge indicated, noting that India's FDI to GDP ratio has been low for a while and is well below other emerging markets.

Urging India to open up trade barriers and lower tariffs to enhance its market access from 12 per cent of GDP to about 50 per cent that many of its rivals have attained, Ohnsorge said this could trigger a manufacturing boom, and create more jobs for India's youth to move them out of low productivity occupations like agriculture.

"The world is big... even if

“EVEN WITH THE SLOWDOWN, PRIVATE INVESTMENT GROWTH IN INDIA IS HIGHER THAN IT IS IN OTHER EMERGING MARKETS AND DEVELOPING ECONOMIES”

Franziska Ohnsorge
South Asia Chief Economist,
World Bank



one trading partner is becoming less accessible, others may become more accessible with trade agreements," the economist said, referring to the US' 50 per cent tariff on Indian goods imports and the country's drive to secure trade deals with EU, Canada and other nations.

"Private investment growth has slowed since the pandemic. That is the opposite of what's happening everywhere else, in other emerging markets, and also the opposite of what has happened in public investment, where you see a dream acceleration. But even with the slowdown, private investment growth in India is higher than it is in other emerging markets and developing economies. So it's slow by Indian standards, but not by international standards," the World Bank economist stressed in an interaction on the sidelines of the Kautilya Economic Conclave.

"What is slow by international standards is FDI that is weak. I have one chart where it's really striking, where you see the interquartile range of all the FDI to GDP ratios in other emerging markets, and then you see the Indian bar well below. So, FDI is the thing that's slow by international standards," she underlined.

Her comments assume significance in the context of the nearly 97 per cent drop in net FDI inflows in 2024-25, partly due to large repatriations by existing foreign investors.

"It could be that currently, there's just, by coincidence, a flood of repatriation, but that's quite a coincidence. Suddenly, a flood of repatriation that makes up for gross FDI flows.. but I have looked at net flows and the logic is that the signal from lower gross FDI or more repatriation is the same (about) investor confidence," she explained.

Asked if foreign investors may be taking a cue from the slow pace of domestic private invest-

ments, she said, "I would assume there's some correlation, but I haven't looked at it. All I know is historically, two years ago, it (FDI inflow) was already low. It was always in the bottom quartile of emerging markets. Maybe it's gotten even lower now."

Emphasising that FDI tends to come into tradeable sectors, Ohnsorge linked this to opportunities in India's goods exports, which are "exceptionally low", partly because of the high tariffs on intermediate goods. "When people talk about India's trade to GDP ratio being low, that is really a reflection of goods exports, not service exports, which are exceptionally high and a success story," she said.

"Everyone has this big tariff number in their head, but what people don't notice is that it implies tariffs on intermediate goods that are double of those elsewhere. In other industries, you can replace intermediate goods with people, like in agriculture. You can't do that in manufacturing which is really hurt by tariffs on intermediate inputs. So if those can be lowered and ideally embedded in a broader trade agreement that goes well beyond tariffs, you could get a real manufacturing renaissance in India," she remarked. "If you look at the trading partners that other countries have trade agreements with... for Mexico, Vietnam, their market access is like 50% of GDP. For India, it's 12% of GDP, according to 2023 data. So you have to add the agreements with UK, the EU, Australia, Canada and possibly the US, then India also could have market access at 50% of GDP," she said, adding this would bolster manufacturing.

Stating that India is well placed to benefit from AI, she pointed to its rapid adoption, especially in services exports and the BPO sector. "Twelve per cent of job postings in the BPO sector since the release of ChatGPT (in November 2022) require AI skills... So the BPO sector is really enthusiastically embracing it (and) there's been a 30 per cent increase in computer services exports, whereas overall services exports have just plateaued," she noted.

'China Can Import More if India Is Open to it'

**Anoushka Sawhney &
Deepshikha Sikarwar**

New Delhi: China can import more from India if the latter is more open to Beijing, said Liqing Zhang, Director at the Centre for International Finance Studies in Beijing, while underlining that greater collaboration in trade and investment could benefit both countries.

Liqing told ET on the sidelines of Kautilya Economic Conclave that India's potential entry into the RCEP (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership) could make its goods more competitive than others as the tariffs on manufactured goods within the block are set to fall to zero within a decade.

"I think that China can certainly import more from India if India is more open to China," he said, expressing hope that both sides can understand each other to solve the traditional border issue.

India's exports to China fell



Liqing Zhang

14.4% to \$14.3 billion in FY25 from \$16.7 billion in FY24. While imports from China grew 11.5% to \$113.4 billion from \$101.7 billion over the same period.

"The RCEP has already been there for a couple of years, but unfortunately, India did not join us. Maybe in the future, India can reconsider this policy," said Liqing.

New Delhi withdrew from RCEP negotiations in 2019.

"I think China would be happy if India joined the RCEP. We could have more integration in trade,

and the bilateral trade will increase very fast," he added.

On investment, he said Chinese companies can set up branches and factories in India.

India's strong service sector and tourism potential also offer opportunities for Chinese investment and increased tourism, thereby leading to growth on both sides.

"China and India are large economies, although there is still a gap between them, India has the most economic growth," said Zhang. "China's growth rate is not so high now, but I think a 5% rate is sustainable."

China's gross domestic product (GDP) growth slowed to 5% in 2024 from 5.4% in 2023, according to the data from the World Bank.

India's GDP surged to a five-quarter high of 7.8% in the April-June period. In FY25, the growth was 6.5%.

Liqing noted that the world was faced with challenges such as protectionism, mainly triggered by the United States, and its recipro-

cal tariff, which will have an impact on economic growth. "I think both China and India will get affected by these shocks," he said. India has been hit with a 50% tariff by the US, while it is 30% for China.

At the same time, technological advances such as Artificial Intelligence and green transformation initiatives, which will drive investment up in this area will lead to economic growth, he added.

AI will play a very significant role, he noted. "I think in the short run (it will) maybe combined with some challenges. But in the long run, I think it will provide more productivity. It means more efficient, higher outcome".

CHINA'S & CONSUMPTION

China is in the process of transformation by making economic growth rely more on consumption rather than exports and investments, which have driven growth for decades, as global trade faces uncertainty due to US tariffs, he explained.

'Trade Reforms Could Transform India's Mfg, Exports'

**Anoushka Sawhney and
Deepshikha Sikarwar**

New Delhi: India could unlock transformative growth in manufacturing and exports by combining tariff reductions with broader trade agreements that expand market access and ease non-tariff barriers, said Franziska Ohnsorge, World Bank's chief economist for South Asia, calling for trade reforms coupled with internal measures for bigger gains.

"If this (higher US tariffs) can be the trigger for finalising these trade agreements that have been under negotiation for a long time, it could be transformative, especially for manufacturing," Ohnsorge said in an interview.

The World Bank on Tuesday raised India's growth forecast for FY26 to 6.5% from 6.3% but trimmed its FY27 estimate to 6.3% from 6.5%.

India's GDP grew 7.8% in the April-June quarter, the fastest in five quarters, after expanding 6.5% in FY25.

The US recently imposed a 50% tariff on Indian goods, including a 25% penalty for importing Russian oil — among the highest globally alongside Brazil. Reducing intermediate tariffs early and embedding them in broader trade agreements that expand market access "could

really be transformative for the export side," Ohnsorge noted.

While trade reforms can lift growth, complementary domestic reforms are critical, she asserted.

"It doesn't have to be labour market reform. It can be housing, transport, digital or skilling reform — anything that makes it easier for people to get much bigger gains from trade reform."

Such reforms, she said, could potentially double the benefits of trade liberalisation. "There's a lot of growth that could be unleashed inside India with domestic policies."

India is currently pursuing 8-10 trade deals, including one with the European Union. Talks with the US on a bilateral trade agreement are also underway.

She pointed to Mexico and Vietnam as examples of economies integrated into global value chains through trade agreements with partners accounting for about 50% of global GDP.

"If you are in that kind of trade agreement, of course you can have a lot of trade. You're embedded in supply chains and getting market access," she said.

For India, based on its current trade pacts (excluding the UK deal), the share is just 12%.

"If you add the UK, EU, Australia, Canada, and maybe even the US, you come close to something like 50% of global GDP," she added. "That could be transformative."

Terming manufacturing India's "sleeping giant," Ohnsorge said the sector held vast untapped potential.

India's goods exports rose 0.14% to \$437.7 billion in FY25, accounting for 11.2% of GDP.

By contrast, services remain India's "success story," she added, with minimal government intervention. Services exports rose 13.6% to \$387.5 billion in FY25.

Asked about the impact of Artificial Intelligence, she said it presented both an opportunity and a challenge. "AI can either make you more productive or

take your job."

Only about 23% of India's workforce is likely to be affected by AI positively or negatively since a large share is engaged in agriculture and manual labour.

Of this, 15% are in roles where AI can enhance productivity, while around 7% are in jobs more likely to be substituted.

Industries that would gain the most from cuts in intermediate tariffs are also those employing young, highly skilled workers, she added. "Trade reforms and AI together would make a nice package."



If this (higher US tariffs) can be the trigger for finalising these trade agreements that have been under negotiation for a long time, it could be transformative

FRANZISKA OHNSORGE

Chief Economist, World Bank

Despite global turbulence, India's exports will be in positive territory in H1 FY26: Goyal

Our Bureau

Mumbai

The government is committed to expand international trade so much so that despite all the global turbulence, the country will be in positive territory on the exports front, both in goods and in services, in the first six months of the current financial year, said Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal.

Global turbulence includes increasing trade fragmentation due to protectionist policies, geopolitical tensions, volatility in global financial markets, frequent weather-related disturbances and supply chain disruptions.

"While final (trade) figures will be out next week, we are in positive territory in exports...with an aggregate growth of between 4 per cent and 5 per cent over the last

An aggregate growth of between 4 per cent and 5 per cent over the last six months. That is India's resilience

PIYUSH GOYAL

Union Commerce Minister

six months. That is India's resilience....I think the country today is at an inflection point, with strong macroeconomic fundamentals, expanding our trade relations with developed countries around the world, focusing on empowering customers with high quality and low taxes," Goyal said in his address at the Global Fintech Fest. He emphasised that the world cannot find a better place than India, with trusted partnerships and the re-



silience of a 500-gigawatt national integrated grid, with 24-hour renewable energy available at under 8 or 9 cents a kilowatt hour for data centres, for applied artificial intelligence to be developed, for growth of the most modern technologies for the rest of the world.

HUGE POTENTIAL

"Our diplomacy today rests on strong ties with different countries and I can assure that the way forward is pre-

nant with possibilities. The way forward holds huge promise, huge potential, huge opportunities," he said.

'TRUST APPRECIATES'

Goyal observed that in the world of finance, trust is the only currency that never depreciates, it only appreciates.

"Eleven years of transformational initiatives, bold policies, structural reforms has in a way demonstrated to the world that India is growing at almost 9-9.5 per cent in US dollar terms, year on year, doubling its GDP every 7.5 or 8 years. And figures speak for themselves. When we aspire to be a \$30-35 trillion economy by 2047, our friends from the finance world can quickly do the math. And you will see that achieving this is very much in the realm of possibility, is very much something that we are all collectively committed to achieve," the Minister said.

Govt may decide on sugar exports after Dec

MOVER AND SHAKER. India likely to be the swing factor as it may have surplus production of 7 million tonnes

Subramani Ra Mancombu
Chennai

India will be the swing factor for the new sugar season, which began on October 1, with a likely surplus of 7 million tonnes (mt) in sugar production, industry analysts and experts say.

However, research agency BMI, a unit of Fitch Solutions, said better-than-expected output in Brazil, a sharp upturn in Indian production, and weaker crude prices had contributed to an increasingly bearish sentiment through Q3 2025.

Analysts at Uruguayan Commodities Media Monitoring group ECRUU's sugar week said the Indian government may decide to resume sugar exports between January and February, depending on the supply-demand situation.

EXPORT ESTIMATES

According to Green Pool Commodity Specialists dir-

ector Tom McNeill, India's 7 million tonnes (mt) sugar surplus in the 2025-26 season will be divided between meeting demand for ethanol and exports.

It sees 4.5 mt of the surplus from the gross production of 35.9 mt production being diverted for ethanol, while exports could be between 1 mt and 2 mt.

Claudiu Covrig of Covrig Analytics said the Indian government may not allow more than 1.8 mt to 2 mt of sugar for exports.

Carlos Murilo Barros de Mello, Head of Sugar and Ethanol at Hedgepoint, USA, projected 1.5 mt of sugar exports from India.

"The (Indian) government's decision on exports will be based on its own estimates of sugar production. If the government's estimates of production are low, then we may have to wait until January-February for the export decision," said Kiran Wadhvani, Director, Comdex India, in an interaction at

Sugar balance sheet

(in million tonnes)

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Production	178	176	177	182	189
Consumption	175	176	178	179	179
Ending stocks	3.5	0.3	-0.6	3.6	10.5

Source: BMI

the ECRUU sugar week.

India could decide on permitting exports as early as December and as late as February, said Covrig. Global surplus sugar will be locked in India, he said.

ISMA PROJECTIONS

BMI, in its outlook issued separately, said India's participation in the global sugar market is expected to increase, reversing the recent trend of low export volumes that contributed to tighter global supplies last season.

Private sugar mills body Indian Sugar and Bio-Energy Manufacturers Association (ISMA) initially pegged gross sugar production at 34.9 million tonnes (mt), up 18 per cent compared with

29.5 mt last season. It expects 5 mt of sugar to be diverted for ethanol production. It has urged the government to permit 2 mt of exports.

BMI estimates Indian production at 35.3 mt, even as it expects Brazil to produce 43.7 mt.

Wadhvani projected sugar consumption in India to rise to 28.5 mt this season. "If there is more sugar in the pipeline, then consumption could rise by another 0.5 mt," he said.

PRICE OUTLOOK

de Mello said the sugar outlook was favourable for India and Thailand.

With the next crop in Brazil likely to be good, there

is no reason for sugar prices to rise for a year or so, he said, adding raw sugar prices could remain stable around 16 US cents a pound.

BMI lowered its average annual price forecast for front-month ICE-listed sugar futures to 17.5 cents, down from its previous projection of 18 cents a pound. "We expect prices to average around 16-17 cents a pound for the remainder of 2025," it said.

The research agency said that the Commodity Futures Trading Commission's latest report, dated September 23, indicated that money managers hold a net short position of 1,51,598 contracts in ICE-listed sugar futures, up from 85,592 contracts at the end of the second quarter this year. Projecting India's consumption at 28.8 mt, Green Pool said Indian sugar mills would look to export as domestic prices are lower.

"The Indian government is under pressure to increase the minimum selling price

for sugar," said Green Pool's McNeill. Wadhvani said mills in Maharashtra and Karnataka could divert sugar for ethanol production if domestic prices fall. Though ISMA has sought a hike in ethanol price, it does not expect it to increase.

3RD LARGEST SURPLUS

Analysts at the ECRUU Sugar Week estimated that the global sugar market will likely witness its third-largest surplus in the 2025-26 season, with India and Thailand playing a significant role.

Green Pool said the Asia-Pacific market, in particular, holds the key to the global sugar market in the current season.

Thailand's production is estimated to rise to 11.35 mt, and it is expected to export 7.6 mt, it said, adding that though the weather is favourable for sugar production in Thailand, the plants are being threatened by the white leaf disease.

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Apeda to retain 30% of non-basmati export fee; basmati shippers demand parity

Prabhudatta Mishra

New Delhi

The Commerce Ministry has authorised its agri-export promotion body, Apeda, to retain 30 per cent of the registration fee collected from non-basmati rice export contracts.

The fee has been set at ₹8 per tonne (plus GST), and a committee has been set up to decide how the remaining funds will be used.

However, this has sparked discontent among basmati rice exporters, who questioned why they were required to contribute 50 per cent of similar fees for developmental purposes.

In July, the Department of Commerce (DoC) approved the creation of the Non-Basmati Rice Development Fund (NBDF), to be managed by a panel chaired by

Apeda's Chairman and comprising eight members, including three industry representatives, sources said.

The fund's operational guidelines were recently finalised.

An official source said, "Apeda started the process of constituting the panel last week by requesting the departments concerned and stakeholders to nominate their representatives so that the panel could hold its first meeting before Diwali."

DUAL TREATMENT

Yet, the decision to fix a 30 per cent share for Apeda as "service and infrastructure charges," to be paid from the NBDF by the end of May every year, has been questioned by some exporters.

They argued that Apeda should reduce its 50 per cent share from the Basmati Export Development Fund

(BEDF) to match the non-basmati rate.

This follows recent protests by basmati exporters' associations in Haryana and Punjab against the hike in export contract registration fees from ₹30 to 70 per tonne.

"For the same work, how can there be two different standards — one for non-basmati and another for basmati?" asked a leading exporter.

He wanted the government to lower both the contract fee and Apeda's share from the BEDF.

PANEL FORMATION

Apeda has written to the Secretaries of the Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE) and the Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, requesting them to nominate representatives (not below Director or

Deputy Secretary rank) to the panel. Similar letters have gone to the Uttar Pradesh and Telangana governments, sources said.

The government will also appoint two representatives from the top 10 rice-producing States with one-year terms. This list will be reviewed every five years.

The NBDF panel will comprise the Presidents of the Kakinada-based The Rice Exporters Association (TREA), the Raipur-based The Rice Exporters Association CG (TREACG), and the Indian Rice Exporters Federation (IREF) as permanent members.

It also stipulated that travel and stay charges for the industry representatives will have to be borne by themselves.

The head of Apeda's cereals division will function as the Member Secretary.

Business Line Dt: 10/10/25

Nayara doubles down on India as EU sanctions hit exports

HOME PUSH. Oil marketing firm banking on domestic consumption to tide over loss

Rishi Ranjan Kala
New Delhi

Nayara Energy aims to leverage its pan-India network of more than 6,700 retail fuel outlets to maintain and expand business momentum as the latest round of sanctions from the European Union (EU) drag down export earnings.

The oil marketing company (OMC), which accounts for around 7 per cent of India's fuel retailing network, is pinning hopes on rising domestic consumption of diesel, petrol and jet fuel to compensate for loss of export cargoes, sources said. It is also exploring strategies such as selling its refined petroleum products to other domestic OMCs as sanctions are making it difficult to book shipping vessels for transporting the cargoes, added one of the sources.

CRUDE OIL PURCHASES

The 4,05,000 barrels per day



OTHER OPTIONS. It is also exploring strategies such as selling its refined petroleum products to other domestic OMCs

(b/d) refinery can produce high quality Bharat Stage (BS VI) compliant fuels. Nayara was able to increase its crude oil purchases last month after it failed to get cargoes from West Asia in August due to EU sanctions announced in July 2025.

Nayara faced compliance, shipping, payment and crude import hurdles post sanctions with operations in August–September 2025 curtailed and exports sharply lower year-on-year, global real time data and analytics

provider Kpler told *business-line* last week.

DOMESTIC FOCUS

Domestic focus makes sense as India's diesel and petrol demand is increasingly aided by rising industrial and domestic consumption.

"Around a third of Nayara's petrol and diesel dispensing stations are in tier-2 and tier-3, towns which will benefit it as energy consumption is inching up and will rise further as rising affluence is leading to higher

purchases of personal vehicles. E-commerce penetration is also boosting logistics," an analyst said.

INDIA PIVOT

Nayara's FY25 annual report also underscores the India focus.

For instance, Nayara's Executive Chairman, Prasad K Panicker, in his message to stakeholders in the report, said, "As we look to the future, we are committed to securing India's energy future through strategic investments in enhancing scale, reliability and self-sufficiency."

Nayara owns and operates the 20 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) Vadinar refinery, which has a Nelson Complexity Index of 11.8 and is capable of processing some of the toughest crude oil grades. As per S&P Global Commodity Insights, Nayara expanded its retail footprint to 6,760 fuel pumps over the course of a year (July 2025), supporting higher domestic sales.

Chickpea imports from Australia may drop next season

GOOD DOMESTIC CROP. New Delhi may ship in less than 5 lakh tonnes during Nov 2025-Oct 2026 against 14 lakh tonnes this season

Subramani Ra Mancombu
Chennai

India may not import more than 5 lakh tonnes of desi chickpeas (*chana*) from Australia during the next marketing season (November 2025-October 2026) as the harvest of the pulse in April 2026 could be higher. Besides, imports of yellow peas by India could be another discouraging factor, a webinar on desi chickpeas update was told.

"Despite the 10 per cent duty on chickpeas, Indian importers are buying the pulse. Last year, by this time, importers had traded 8 lakh tonnes. They have not traded even 2 lakh tonnes till now. India may not buy more than 5 lakh tonnes," said Binod Agarwal, Managing Partner of SGR Agristeel.

Last year, Australia exported 1 lakh tonnes in October,

4.5-5 lakh tonnes in November and 1 million tonnes (mt) to India. "That does not seem to be happening now," said Jay Saraff of Australia's Mandala Trading.

UP 5X THIS SEASON

Data from the Australian Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry show that chickpeas exports during the current marketing year increased five times to nearly 2 mt from around 4 lakh tonnes last season. Of this, about 1.4 mt were shipped to India.

Current sentiments are not favouring imports of chickpeas. The pulse is being traded in the range of \$470-480 a tonne cost and freight (CFR).

"Indian importers will be active if chickpeas are available in the \$450-470 range and the import duty remains at 10 per cent," said Agarwal.

The Indian government



policy on the import duty is unlikely to change at least until March 31, 2026 since it faces criticism for taking short-term decisions. "So, the decision will be long term," he said.

Usually, the chickpea crop, grown during the rabi season with harvest in April, turns out to be good after heavy rain and it was likely this marketing year too, the SGR Agristeel Managing Partner said.

However, prices of black matpe (urad) and pigeon

peas (tur) have increased as heavy rain had affected these pulses crops.

40% PRICE DROP

Saraff said, "Chickpeas prices have dropped 40 per cent in the past year. Last year, they were traded at \$800-900 a tonne during the same time. Prices have hit the bottom and it may not be worth selling chickpeas. It will be tough to predict their CFR prices, though it could be \$470," he said.

However, Saraff sees

Rising acreage Down Under

	2024-25	2025-26
Area (in hectares)	1,038,500	1,077,500
Production (in tonnes)	2,267,000	2,102,500
Yield (tonnes per hectare)	2.18	1.95

Source: ABARES

chickpeas bottoming in the \$450-500 a tonne range.

Data from the Global Pulses Confederation (GPC), which organised the webinar, show that forward contracts for November were signed by Australian growers at \$490 a tonne. Tanzania has signed forward contracts for supply to Pakistan at \$560 for the same period.

Samir Esmail of Afrisian Ginning Ltd, Tanzania, said some consignments heading to Pakistan were being switched to India.

Saraff said, "If India does not come to the market for

Australian chickpeas, then it could create problems. India needs to buy but the question is the price at which it buys," he said.

YELLOW PEAS CHECK

If chickpeas prices continue to rule low, Australian growers may switch the way they trade by retaining the pulse and selling barley and wheat upfront to meet their cash needs, he said. The carryover stocks of chickpeas from the current marketing season are almost nil.

SGR's Agarwal said the Australian Bureau of Agriculture and Resource Economics (ABARES) had estimated the chickpea crop at 2.1 mt. "But we hear the crop could be as high as 2.5 mt. Anything above 2 mt is excess," he said.

India has 1.65 mt of chickpea stocks in the pipeline, including produce procured at the minimum support price

(MSP) through the price support system. "The government is retaining its procurement, while farmers are expected to continue bringing chickpeas until November-December. So, there should be no supply problem over the next 2-3 months," Agarwal said, adding that in addition duty-free yellow peas imports would keep prices of chickpeas lower.

Canada is selling yellow peas to India at \$340 a tonne, while Russia and Ukraine are offering them at \$330 a tonne, GPC data showed.

Agarwal said chickpeas production in 2025 was 7 mt in India, which is lower than the government's estimate of 11 mt. "Had the production been as per government's estimates, we would not have seen so much imports," he said. Afrisian's Esmail said Indian importers were showing interest in Tanzania chickpeas.

Business Line. Dt: 13/10/25

Hinduja Group to step up focus on e-mobility in domestic, export markets

POWERING UP. Company plans to expand market presence across the entire range of e-trucks and e-buses

Aroosa Ahmed
Mumbai

With the rising demand for Electric Vehicles, the Hinduja Group is planning to increase its electric vehicle penetration across the bus and commercial vehicle segments by 2030.

Operating in the electric bus, heavy and light commercial vehicle segments through Switch Mobility and Ashok Leyland, the company anticipates strong demand momentum.

"We would expect the penetration in electric buses to be 15 per cent, but with the State Transport Undertaking (STU), this will be more than double. In the case of trucks, it will be between 5-10 per cent. In the Heavy Commercial Vehicle (HCV) segment, we

Switch Mobility is planning to offer its e-buses and e-LCVs across North Africa, the GCC, ASEAN, and select European countries

AMIT SAHARIA
Group President - Strategy,
Hinduja Group

will be looking at 15 to 20 per cent, in the Light Commercial Vehicle (LCV) segment, it should be between 20 to 30 per cent by 2030," said Amit Saharia, Group President - Strategy, Hinduja Group, in an interaction with *business-line*. The conglomerate believes that the electric



vehicle demand will play out differently for commercial vehicles in the domestic market. While the petrol and diesel commercial vehicles will contribute up to 10 per cent in the segment.

The market demand will depend on supply and demand incentives that are on

the ground. Presently, the incentives are maximum for the buses segment, which accounts for the higher growths compared to other segments, added Amit Saharia.

In order to ensure an end-to-end electric vehicle ecosystem, Ashok Leyland had partnered with China's CALB Group to localise batteries.

BATTERY PRODUCTION

The company plans to invest over ₹5,000 crore for battery production over the next 7-10 years, which could cater to non-captive demand in the automotive sector as well as the energy storage sector in India.

The group is also focusing on increasing exports of its electric vehicle portfolio. Switch Mobility is planning to offer its e-buses and e-

The company plans to invest over ₹5,000 crore for battery production over the next 7 to 10 years targeting non-captive demand and energy storage sector

Light Commercial Vehicles (LCV) across North Africa, the GCC, ASEAN, Nepal, and select European countries. Switch Mobility has a contract for 100 electric buses in Mauritius and 13 e-buses in Dubai.

Further, it also has trial orders from Seychelles, Kenya, Spain, Nepal, and Bhutan.

\$59-B TRADE DEFICIT WITH RUSSIA IN 2024-25

The Economic Times DT 13/10/25

India Taking Up Export Barriers with Russia

Identifies over 65 non-tariff barriers faced by its marine exporters as well as hurdles in agricultural trade

Kirtika Suneja

New Delhi: India has identified more than 65 non-tariff barriers faced by its marine exports to Russia as well as the hurdles that its agricultural exports are subject to, as it aims to lower the trade deficit with the country, said officials.

"India is taking up with Russia the issue of non-tariff barriers. Most are in agriculture and marine," said one of the officials, who did not wish to be identified.

While Russia has opened up to some varieties of Indian mango and bananas in the past few years, one key concern pertains to the approval of marine product units from India for shrimp exports. India's goods exports to Russia in 2024-25 totalled \$4.88 billion, of which frozen shrimp and prawns exports amounted to \$123 million.

An early settlement of the non-ta-



riff hurdles is crucial for India as it had a \$59 billion trade deficit with Russia in 2024-25.

"Only registered entities can supply shrimp to Russia and we have been trying to get the issue resolved. The EU has also given registration for many of our units," the official said.

Moreover, Russia, as part of the Eurasian Economic Union (EA-

TRADE TALK

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EU), has firmed up the framework for a trade agreement with India. The EAEU comprises Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Armenia.

India and the EAEU have signed the terms of reference to launch negotiations on a free trade agreement, establishing the framework and priorities for talks aimed at boosting trade and investment.

"Early resolution of the non-tariff barriers is important as it will also be a good background for the trade deal negotiations and Russia is the largest member of the bloc," the official said.

Fixing the issue is key for diversifying India's shrimp exports, which have been hit hard by a steep 50% tariff imposed by the US.

India also sees an opportunity in exporting more frozen fish meat, frozen rock lobster, sea crawfish, cuttlefish and squid to Russia, where Vietnam, Ecuador and Indonesia are some of the key suppliers.

In a move to reduce the trade gap, the commerce and industry ministry has reached out to industry on customs clearance and documentation challenges, freight issues in reaching Russia and banking-related difficulties, especially payment mechanisms, besides key product segments for export expansion and the possibility of joint ventures.