India's dynamic economy set to grow even more : Goldman Sachs

India’s measures to improve the recovery of bad loans and a recapitalization plan equivalent to 1.1 percent of GDP will lower costs for lenders and boost the growth of Asia’s third-largest economy, according to Goldman Sachs. Analysts at the bank said that a decline in credit costs of Indian banks is likely to boost the capacity of lenders to extend loans and, in turn, boost GDP growth. “We estimate that credit costs, how much banks set aside each year to deal with bad loans, could fall from a peak of 230 basis points of banking system assets,” the analysts said. The decline in costs will raise loan growth by 140 basis points, which in turn should boost investment growth by 200 basis points. That should translate into a 60-basis-point boost to economic growth in the financial year ending March 2020.

India to set up transmission projects worth USD 5 billion to support renewable energy expansion

To ensure that the rapidly expanding renewable energy capacity and planned auctions of large-scale solar and wind energy projects have the adequate transmission capacity to supply power to demand centers across the country, India has announced expansive plans to set up transmission projects. India has completed auctions for 12 gigawatts of transmission projects by December 2018, while an additional 38 gigawatts of transmission projects will be bid out between July 2019 and March 2020. The projects are planned in a manner to compliment the aggressive auctions timeline announced by the government for large-scale solar and wind energy projects. The government plans to finish all solar and wind energy auctions by March 2020 that would result in installed solar and wind capacity to reach 100 gigawatts and 60 gigawatts, respectively.

India’s Payments Corporation considering blockchain technology to strengthen digital transactions

The National Payments Corporation of India [NPCI] is considering the implementation of blockchain technology in an effort to strengthen digital transactions in the country. This initiative is being promoted by ten banks with backing from the Indian Banks Association [IBA] and it aims to become the “best payment network globally”. It is also an umbrella organization which runs retail payments and settlement systems in India and encompasses 56 national banks as stakeholders. Setup with the guidance and support of the Reserve Bank of India and the IBA, the NPCI will work on developing blockchain technology in the payment field to boost digital transactions. NPCI has successfully developed the Unified Payments Interface [UPI] payment system and is gaining traction in the country.

Global precision agriculture leader Trimble Inc. to expand footprint in India

Global Precision Agriculture leader Trimble Inc. said that it is committed to the Indian government’s mission of doubling farmers’ income and is pursuing a three-pronged strategy to increase the adoption of Precision Agriculture in India in order to boost farm productivity. The company said it is in discussions with tractor Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) to bring its precision auto-steer and auto-guidance technologies to Indian farmers. Trimble's auto steer and auto guidance technology use GNSS-based navigation to accurately guide a tractor's movements in the field, which leads to better sowing of seeds and harvesting of crops; in turn increasing crop yields of cash crops like potatoes by as much as 30%. Furthermore, the company aims to expand its distribution of laser-levelling solutions to cover major Indian states by 2020.
India's ride sharing firm set to launch services in London, U.K

India's ride sharing giant Ola is all set to launch its services in London before the end of the year after launching in five smaller UK cities. The Bangalore-based startup commenced operations in Liverpool in March 2019, having established its first European business in Cardiff in August 2018 and later added Bath, Bristol and Exeter. Reading and Birmingham will follow this month, along with Manchester in May 2019. UK Managing Director, Ben Legg said the step-by-step approach should help Ola crack the London market. No date for entering the capital has been set, but plans are being developed and the launch will come before November 2019 and the start of the pre-Christmas rush. Ola, owned by ANI Technologies, raised USD 300 million from Hyundai Motor Group in March 2019, giving the ride-hailing startup a valuation of about USD 6 billion.

Lenovo-Motorola shifts focus to profitability, making India exports hub

Lenovo-owned handset maker Motorola is planning to make India an exports hub, a top executive said, adding the company has shifted focus away from volumes to profitability due to the brutal competition in the local smartphone market. The handsets maker expects to start shipments to countries in Latin America and the Asia Pacific region by the end of April 2019 said Prashanth Mani, the country head for Lenovo's mobile business group and managing director of Motorola Mobility. The Lenovo-Motorola combine has increased manufacturing capacity to 12 million units. “We can always scale it up basis the demand. A lot of investment is going into this,” Mani said, without specifying the quantum of investment. The October-December quarter of 2018 was Lenovo’s best, while Motorola turned operationally profitable globally.

Volkswagen to expand corporate business centre initiative in India

Volkswagen announced the expansion of its corporate business centre (CBC) programme in India with the addition of 10 more such outlets across its sales network over the next three months. The corporate business centre comprises of a dedicated team providing curated services to all kinds of businesses across sectors, including leasing and rent-a-car solution providers, corporates and government employees. “The corporate business centre is a key pillar in Volkswagen’s India strategy. We aim to make it the fastest growing corporate fleet business in India,” Volkswagen Passenger Cars Director Steffen Knapp said in a statement. Through this programme, the company will offer enhanced accessibility, affordability, value-for-money and a holistic experience that corporate customers look for in a Volkswagen, he added.

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India is the world's largest diamond cutting and polishing center.

Apple to start mass production of iPhones in India with the help of Foxconn

Apple is planning to start mass production of iPhones in India with the help of Foxconn. The Taiwanese company is Apple's largest manufacturer of iPhones. Apple already has Wistron producing older iPhone models in Bengaluru, India, and the manufacturer recently started making the iPhone 7 locally. With Foxconn, Apple plans to expand manufacturing to produce newer iPhone models. Apple has been keen to break into the Indian smartphone market, which is one of the fastest growing markets in the world. But the company has been struggling to grab significant market share in the country due to rising iPhone prices and affordable alternatives from competing OEMs. By locally manufacturing iPhones in India, Apple will be able to avoid import duties of 20 per cent, which means newer iPhone models could become more affordable.

India's services exports rise 5.5% to USD 15.6 billion in February 2019

India's services exports rose 5.5 per cent to USD 16.58 billion in February 2018-19 from USD 15.71 billion in the same month a year ago, as per the RBI data on India’s International Trade in Services: February 2019. Services imports in February 2018-19 declined by 3.3 per cent to USD 9.81 billion, compared to USD 10.14 billion in the year-ago month. The imports stood at USD 11.3 billion during January this year. The services sector is not only the dominant sector in India’s GDP, but has also attracted significant foreign investment flows. India’s services sector covers a wide variety of activities such as trade, hotel and restaurants, transport, storage and communication, financing, insurance, real estate, business services, community, social and personal services, and services associated with construction.