

GDP GROWTH RATE FALLS TO 4.5% FOR SECOND QUARTER THIS FINANCIAL YEAR

Six-year low — and slow

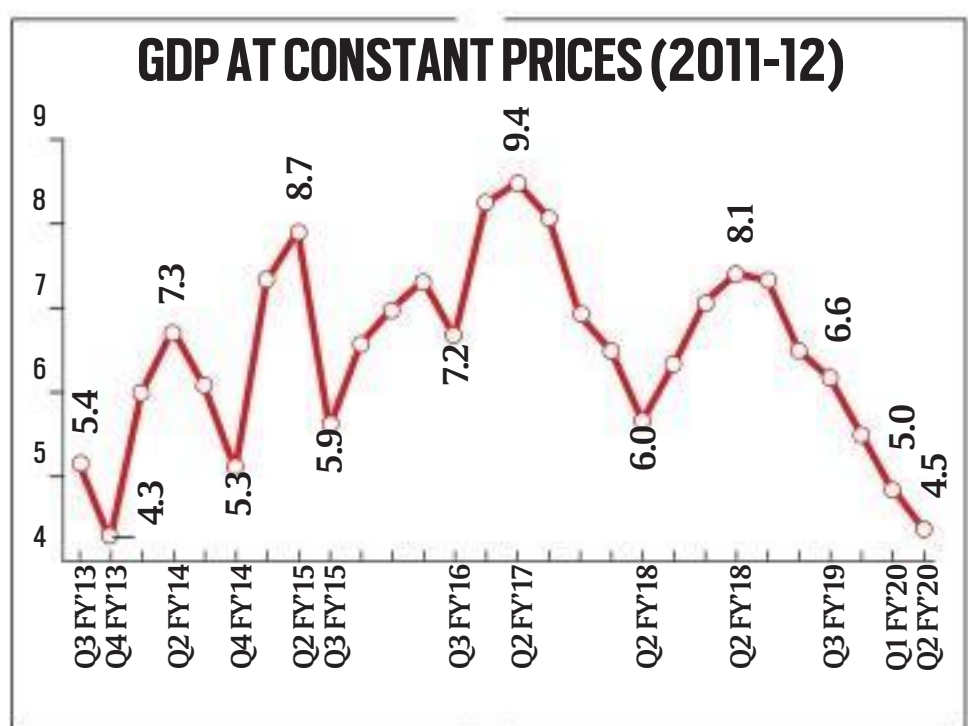
Expected to hit income growth, which would dent consumption demand

AANCHAL MAGAZINE
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

DRAGGED DOWN by a contraction in manufacturing, weak investment, and lower consumption demand, India's GDP growth rate at 4.5 per cent for Q2, 2019-20, hit a 26-quarter low in July-September, data released by National Statistical Office Friday showed.

This is the lowest quarterly growth rate in the five-and-half years of the Narendra Modi-led NDA government. The previous low was 4.3 per cent during January-March 2012-13.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), scheduled to announce its bi-monthly monetary policy



Value Added (GVA), which is GDP minus net product taxes and reflects supply-side growth, has slowed to 4.3 per cent in July-September as against 6.9 per cent a year ago. With this, GDP growth rate for April-September, the first half of this fiscal, is now at 4.8 per cent as against 7.5 per cent growth in the year-ago period.

The growth rate has now slowed for the sixth consecutive quarter, declining by 3.6 percentage points during this period.

The nominal GDP growth rate, which accounts for inflation, slowed further from the first quarter to 6.1 per cent in July-September from double-digit level of 12 per cent in the corresponding period last year.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

statement on December 5, is expected to continue its accommodative monetary

policy stance with another repo rate cut to support growth. Growth rate in terms of Gross

Manmohan flags fear, India Inc's silence on slowdown is telling

SANDEEP SINGH
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

CALLING THE 4.5 per cent growth for the second quarter ending September 2019 as "shock decline" and "worrysome", former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh Friday said that many industrialists have told him they lived in fear of harassment by government authorities.

His words, perhaps, found resonance in the silence of several leading voices in India Inc after the GDP figures came in.

The Confederation of Indian Industry, the leading industry body, skipped issuing a statement on the GDP numbers.

Leading corporate lights active on Twitter Uday Kotak (CEO Kotak Mahindra Bank); Anand Mahindra (chairman, Mahindra Group); Harsh Goenka (chairman, RPG Enterprises); Nandan Nilekani (chairman, Infosys); Sanjiv Bajaj (MD Bajaj Finserv & Bajaj Holdings); Gautam Singhania (CMD Raymond Ltd); Vijay Shekhar Sharma (Founder CEO, Paytm); and Harsh Mariwala (chairman Marico) were prominent among many who chose to maintain silence on the GDP numbers on their



'Can't separate society from economy'

handles until late tonight.

In sharp contrast, when the government announced a cut in the corporate tax rate in September, the entire corporate sector had cheered the move saying it would spur growth.

On September 20, Anand Mahindra had tweeted: "Woke up in the US to this news. The best way to start the day. Not only because companies will pay less tax. But because this isn't just another policy tweak. @nsitharaman fired a shot that will be heard around the world. India has sent an invitation letter to global investors."

Similarly, Harsh Goenka had on September 20, tweeted, "Virat cut by FM #Corporatetax. Much needed boost to unleash 'animal spirits'. I now expect the sentiment to change and private investments to start flowing. Sensex 'boom'rah!." In another tweet, he wrote: "Truly showing that the Government knows best! #MarketsRejoice"

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Sri Lanka President Gotabaya Rajapaksa at Hyderabad House, Friday. Praveen Khanna

Won't allow third country affect our ties: Gotabaya on India's China worry

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

IN ONE-ON-ONE talks for an hour Friday with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, visiting Sri Lanka President Gotabaya Rajapaksa is said to have conveyed that he will not allow "any third country or third force" to come in the way of the strong bilateral ties between Delhi and Colombo.

Modi announced a \$50-million Line of Credit for security and counter-terrorism, and another \$400 million for development and infrastructure projects in Sri Lanka.

This is Gotabaya's first overseas visit after he took charge of the country as President less than two weeks ago. He invited Modi to visit Sri Lanka as the first head of government after he assumed office.

Brother of Sri Lanka's Prime Minister and former President Mahinda Rajapaksa, Gotabaya is learnt to have conveyed to Modi that relations with India will be his "top priority".

In a public statement after the bilateral meeting at Hyderabad House, he tried to assuage Indian concerns on Chinese projects in the island country. "While with India, our

cooperation is multi-faceted, with priority given to security-related matters; With other countries, initiatives for cooperation are by and large economic and commercial (in nature)," he said.

"We will continue to work closely with India to ensure that the Indian Ocean remains a zone of peace." This was aimed at Delhi's concerns, stemming from its past experience with the Rajapaksa between 2005 and 2015 when Gotabaya was Defence Secretary under Mahinda Rajapaksa's Presidency, and Chinese ships and submarines had docked at Lankan ports.

Maritime security in mind, Modi, who called Sri Lanka as India's "closest maritime neighbour and a trusted friend", said that in line with the government's "Neighbourhood First" policy and SAGAR doctrine, India prioritised its relations with Sri Lanka. "The security and development of our two countries are inseparable. Therefore, it is natural that we should be aware of each other's safety and sensibilities," he said.

"A stable, secure and prosperous Sri Lanka is not only in India's interest but also in the interest of the entire Indian Ocean Region," he said.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Why this isn't a surprise and how Govt and RBI saw this coming more than a year ago

PVAIDYANATHAN IYER
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

IN JUST about a year-and-a-half, India has hurtled down the economic growth path. The GDP grew at a robust 8.1 per cent in January-March 2018. Since then, it has decelerated every consecutive quarter and latest figures show it is estimated at 4.5 per cent for July-September 2019. The bottom to the downward

spiral is getting harder to predict. This sharp powering down has disrupted the plans of Corporate India.

Companies across sectors — from those making tractors to toothpaste — had, over the last two decades, been primed to plan for a trend growth rate of 8 per cent. Investments were made, loans taken, capacities built, and people employed accordingly.

This normalised assumption has been wrecked, with an almost halving of the growth rate.

There have been tell-tale signs of this dramatic unravelling since the collapse of IL&FS a year ago in September 2018. A string of events since then has led to a freeze in the credit market. The financial sector is on the brink. The Reserve Bank of India and

INSIDE

GROWTH SLUMPS ACROSS INDUSTRIAL, SERVICE SECTORS

PAGE 19

the government have been unable to address two critical needs of the industry, namely, cost of credit and availability of credit.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Zurich Airport wins bid to build airport at UP's Jewar

AMIL BHATNAGAR
NOIDA, NOVEMBER 29

SWISS COMPANY Zurich Airport International AG will construct and develop the international greenfield airport at Jewar in Uttar Pradesh. The company Friday outbid three Indian competitors — Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL), Adani Enterprises Limited and Anchorage Infrastructure Investments — after qualifying for the technical bid.

"The Swiss company has offered the maximum premium per passenger for the upcoming Jewar airport and has been selected as concessionaire. The bid will be placed before the monitoring and implementation committee on Monday, where approval from the state government will be sought. The bidding process went smoothly and we are looking forward to the results," Shailendra Bhatia, nodal officer of the Noida International Airport Limited, said.

According to officials, the Switzerland-based company made the highest return per passenger financial bid, offering Rs 400.97 premium per passenger (pax). Adani Enterprises placed a bid of Rs 361; DIAL of Rs 351 and Anchorage of Rs 205.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Security personnel on patrol in Latehar which votes Saturday in the first of the five-phase Jharkhand Assembly elections. PTI

Jharkhand starts voting today, test for BJP after Maharashtra

ABHISHEK ANGAD
DALTONGANJ & LATEHAR, NOVEMBER 29

POLLING PERSONNEL were being airlifted to remote locations Friday as Jharkhand braced for the first of the five-phase Assembly elections starting Saturday. Coming as it does after the loss of the big state of Maharashtra, this is going to be a

test for the ruling BJP whose Chief Minister Raghubar Das faces anti-incumbency, rural distress, resentment over lack of jobs, even a divide within over the choice of poll candidates.

The party, as in other states, is counting on the image of the Prime Minister, the state's "double-engine growth" claim, its "stable government" electoral plank, rapid construction of roads in the interiors, and the

crackdown on Naxals to help it retain power.

In the first phase, a total of 37,83,055 voters, including 18,01,356 women, will decide the fate of 189 candidates in 13 constituencies spread over six districts.

Nineteen of Jharkhand's 24 districts are affected by Left Wing Extremism — one reason why the election process has

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY



For her praise of Godse, Pragya made to apologise twice in LS

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

UNDER FIRE for her remarks praising Mahatma Gandhi's assassin Nathuram Godse that forced her party to remove her from the consultative committee on defence, BJP Bhopal MP Pragya Singh Thakur had to apologise twice in Lok Sabha Friday after an angry Opposition rejected her first apology.

Her first apology, in which she also attacked Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for calling her a "terrorist", was rejected as "conditional" by the Opposition, forcing speaker Om Birla to call a meeting of floor leaders of parties to resolve the issue and resume normalcy in the House.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Rape-murder of vet: Four accused deflated scooter tyre before offering help

SREENIVAS JANYALA
SHAMSHABAD, NOV 29

ONE OF them deflated the rear tyre of her two-wheeler parked at the toll plaza on the outskirts of Hyderabad. When she returned, two of them offered help. Scared by a truck crew "leering" at her, she took up the offer and waited at the spot. Three of them pounced from behind and dragged her to an abandoned room and raped her. She died of suffocation during the assault. They burned her body at an underpass.

This is the conclusion of police in Hyderabad based on the interrogation of four men who were arrested Friday for the alleged rape and murder of a 27-year-old veterinary doctor near the Shamshabad toll plaza on Wednesday night.

Those arrested have been identified as Mohammed Areef (26), Jollu Shiva (20), Jollu Naveen (20) and Chintakunta Chennakeshavulu (20), all truck



The crime took place less than 100 m from toll plaza

crew hailing from Narayanpet district. The four have been charged under IPC sections 302 (murder), 375 (rape) and 362 (abduction).

On Friday, a few minutes after Cyberabad Police Commissioner V C Sajjanar announced the arrests, police found the charred remains of another woman near Shamshabad. Based on the crime scene, police

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

HER DAILY STRUGGLE

PAGE 12

Living in Luxury

A RED initiative appears in today's edition of *The Indian Express*. The pages are an initiative of the marketing solutions team of The Indian Express Group and contain content paid for by advertisers. The pages should be read as an advertisement.

THE EDITORIAL PAGE

A DATABASE OF A DIFFERENT INDIA
BY PRATAP BHANU MEHTA
PAGE 14

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

VARINDER BHATIA
DHARAMSHALA, NOVEMBER 29

FOR ALL those who want to know about his "reincarnation" — from a wary China to millions of followers across the globe — the Dalai Lama has a very simple question: Why the hurry?

"Resolutions regarding my reincarnation have been adopted. But a few years ago, I was in the United States of America and I was asked about my reincarnation there. Then, I took off my spectacles and stated, how do I look? What is

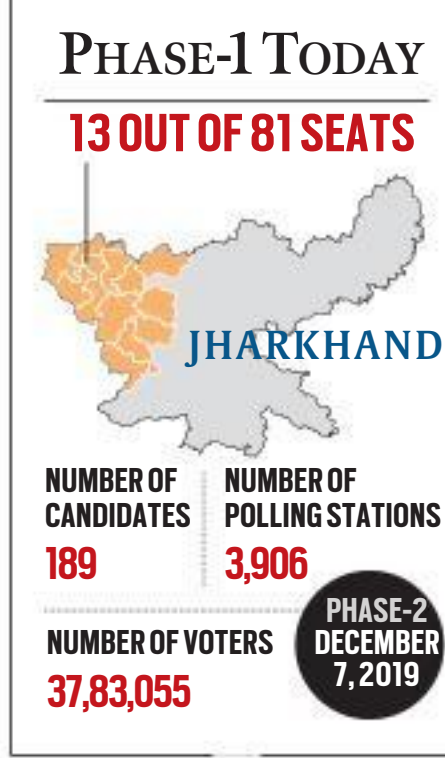
the hurry for my reincarnation? Now, I am 84, but my health is good."

The remarks came at the end of an hour-long address by the Nobel laureate and 14th Dalai Lama in Dharamshala. In the audience were over 200 religious heads, including representatives of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), who had gathered for the three-day 14th Religious Conference.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, a senior member of the CTA said: "A few years ago, His Holiness had said that he shall announce his reincarnation plans either at the age of 84 or



The Dalai Lama in Dharamshala, Friday. ANI



On his reincarnation, Dalai Lama's answer: Why hurry?

when he turns 90. The first Dalai Lama was the only one who had reached the age of 84... But since His Holiness has said today that he is in good health, we are sure that he will live a long life and shall announce his reincarnation at the age of 90."

At the conference, which ended Friday, the leaders unanimously passed a resolution that a decision on the reincarnation, including the announcement venue and timing, vests solely in the Dalai Lama.

The resolution also took a shot at China, which had issued an order in 2007 that a "reincarnation application must be filed

by all Buddhist temples in China before they are allowed to recognize individuals as (reincarnated teachers)".

Titled "Dharamshala Declaration", the resolution states: "If the Government of the People's Republic of China for political ends chooses a candidate for the Dalai Lama, the Tibetan people will not recognize and respect that candidate. Regarding the method of recognizing the future reincarnations of the Dalai Lama, the same unique Tibetan traditional method, which has been continuously used until now, will be followed. This method conforms

to be basic philosophy and tenets of the Buddhadharma and originated in Tibet over 800 years ago".

In October, a Special General Meeting on Reincarnation in Dharamshala had passed a similar resolution. On Thursday, Dr Lobsang Sangay, the CTA president, had told *The Indian Express*: "The Chinese want to interfere in selecting the reincarnated Lamas... They have already selected 300. Now, they say they have a list of 1,300 that they have selected, and given certificates as Lamas. The communist party is interfering in selecting Lamas".