

THE COMSOC GAZETTE



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FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

STOCK MARKET

STARTUPS

ECONOMY

GEO POLITICS

SCIENCE AND TECH

COMSOG GENIE



CONTENTS

TABLE OF



Financial Foresights

01

Corporate Odyssey

02

The Economic Lens

03

Sustainable Synergies

04

The Global Chessboard

05

Scientific Spectra

06

ComSoc Genie

07

FINANCIAL FORESIGHTS

01 FINANCE MINISTRY CRACKS DOWN ON CONTRACTOR WAGE DELAYS WITH NEW PROCUREMENT RULES

The government is taking a firm stand for contract workers, and it's using procurement power to do it. The finance ministry has made it clear that companies who want government contracts must play by the rules when it comes to their workers. This affects outsourced and contractual staff across central ministries, departments, autonomous bodies, and public sector enterprises.

The biggest change is to Rule 151 of the General Financial Rules 2017. Until now, firms could be blacklisted mainly for corruption or fraud. Now, failing to pay workers on time or skipping statutory social security deposits can get you banned from government contracts for up to three years, especially if the government had to step in and cover what you owed. The thinking is straightforward: contractors have long gotten away with wage delays because the consequences were minimal. By tying compliance to the ability to win government business, the ministry is betting that accountability will follow the money. The goal is simple that workers should be paid what they're owed, on time, every time.



02 INDIA APPROVES RS 30 BILLION FOR MALDIVES UNDER SAARC CURRENCY SWAP

On the same day the Maldives repaid a \$400 million swap it had taken in October 2024 under an RBI currency arrangement, it drew down fresh support, a sign that the financial relationship between the two countries is very much active.

Since the SAARC Swap Framework began in 2012, India has extended over \$1.1 billion in swap support to the Maldives. The arrangement gives the island nation access to foreign exchange during times of stress, without having to rely on expensive commercial borrowing. For India, it serves a dual purpose which is deepening economic ties with a close neighbour while quietly countering growing external influence in the region. Officials in Male say the fresh funds will give their foreign exchange reserves an immediate cushion and help stabilise an economy navigating global headwinds. With West Asia adding fresh geopolitical uncertainty to the mix, the timing of India's support is seen as critical to keeping investor confidence intact and external payments on track.



CORPORATE ODYSSEY

01 SBI SHARES CRASH UP TO 7% POST-Q4 RESULTS, LEADING PSU BANK INDEX 4% LOWER

Shares of State Bank of India fell nearly 7.5% on Friday, hitting a four-week low after the bank reported quarterly earnings that missed market expectations. Although the stock recovered slightly during the session, it still closed around 6.7% lower, dragging the broader PSU Bank index down with it. SBI's net profit for the January–March quarter did rise about 5.6% year-on-year, but investors were looking for stronger numbers. Total income also declined compared to last year, while net interest income posted only modest growth, reinforcing concerns that core performance remained underwhelming.

The larger problem came from treasury operations. Rising bond yields reduced the value of the bank's bond holdings, while RBI restrictions on forex arbitrage further pressured trading income. Treasury earnings saw a steep decline, weighing heavily on overall profitability.

Attention will now shift to whether SBI can stabilise earnings and regain investor confidence over the coming quarters.



02 ACCENTURE CEO JULIE SWEET ON CORPORATE AMERICA PROBLEM: ALL THE DATA IS SHOWING COMPANIES ARE INVESTING IN AI, BUT

Accenture CEO Julie Sweet has warned that companies are investing heavily in AI tools while spending far less on training employees to use them effectively. According to Sweet, many firms are adopting AI without building the workforce skills needed to support it.

Accenture has taken a more aggressive approach internally. Sweet told employees that AI is now central to the company's operations and that career growth increasingly depends on integrating AI into daily work. She compared the transition to the adoption of computers in offices decades ago.

Between late 2023 and 2025, Accenture expanded its generative AI training efforts from 30 employees to more than 550,000, backed by nearly \$1 billion annually in workforce development. At the same time, the company laid off over 11,000 employees who could not be retained for AI-focused roles while continuing to hire in AI and data services.

For much of the IT services sector, the AI challenge is becoming as much about workforce adaptation as technology itself.



01 IMF REVISES GLOBAL GROWTH OUTLOOK AMID TARIFF TURBULENCE

There was something notably subdued about this year's International Monetary Fund Spring Meetings in Washington. The IMF cut its 2026 global growth forecast to 2.8%, down from 3.3% less than a year ago, largely due to worsening trade fragmentation and slowing international demand.

Supply chains built over decades are being steadily dismantled in the name of strategic autonomy, and the economic costs are becoming harder to ignore. IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva warned that a full global economic split could reduce worldwide output by roughly 7%, a figure serious enough to shift policy conversations beyond rhetoric.

Emerging economies face the added pressure of a strong US dollar, tighter credit conditions, and weakening investor confidence. India, however, held relatively steady. The IMF maintained its 6.5% growth forecast, driven by domestic demand and infrastructure spending. Even so, the broader message remained clear: strong projections are not a substitute for fiscal discipline or long-term economic reform.



02 RIYADH ASKED THE RIGHT QUESTION. NOBODY HAD A CLEAR ANSWER.

The World Economic Forum does not always produce breakthroughs, but its April gathering in Riyadh at least managed to ask something worthwhile: who actually benefits when AI reshapes the global economy? Delegates from around 90 countries spent considerable time circling that question, and the honest answer, for most of the room, was uncomfortable.

The productivity gap between countries rapidly adopting AI and those still struggling to build basic digital infrastructure continues to widen. While a proposal for a Global AI Equity Fund emerged from the World Bank and UNCTAD, the details behind it remained disappointingly vague.

What the forum did confirm is that the next chapter of global inequality will not be written purely in wages. It will show up in who controls data, who trains the models, and who gets automated out of relevance. India's G20 digital framework kept getting referenced as a workable template, whether out of genuine admiration or convenience.



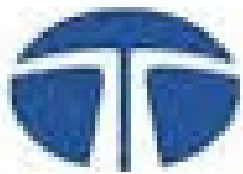
SUSTAINABLE SYNERGIES

01 BHUTAN HYDROPOWER AGREEMENT AUGMENTED BY TATA POWER

One of India's largest power companies, Tata Power, amended its Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Bhutanese power giant, Druk Green Power Corporation (DGPC) to further their energy partnership in the Kingdom of Bhutan.

Through this amendment, a new 404 MW Nyera Amari I & II integrated hydropower project has been added to the original MoU, aimed at establishing 4500 MW hydropower projects in Bhutan.

This move elevates Bhutan's total identified hydropower capacity to 5,033 MW.



TATA POWER

02 KPI GREEN SECURES NTPC RENEWABLE ENERGY SOLAR ORDERS



KPI Green Energy Ltd. gained the Notifications of Award (NOAs) from NTPC Renewable Energy Ltd. for the balance-of-system (BOS) packages, to be used for the development of 500 MW solar PV projects. This will be a grid-connected project in the city of Bikaner, Rajasthan.

The NOA has been segregated into 2 parts or blocks of 300MW and 200MW each.

The contract is valued at Rs. 621 Crore, bifurcating into Rs. 367 Crore and Rs. 254 Crore for the blocks.

The project heralds KPI Green's entry into Rajasthan's energy landscape.

01 THE UAE'S EXIT FROM OPEC AND THE RISE OF STRATEGIC AUTONOMY



The UAE's decision to leave OPEC did not come out of nowhere. It has some of the world's lowest production costs, yet still faces limits on how much oil it can pump. Eventually, that arrangement stops making economic sense.

The larger problem is that OPEC has always relied on members putting collective discipline ahead of national interest. That was never an easy balance, and the UAE is simply the first Gulf producer willing to challenge it openly.

For Saudi Arabia, the optics are uncomfortable. Riyadh's influence within OPEC depends heavily on Gulf unity, and that image now looks weaker. Other frustrated members may feel less pressure to stay aligned.

Beyond oil markets, the message is broader: multilateral systems hold only as long as costs feel fairly shared. Once that balance disappears, membership starts to look less like cooperation and more like a burden.

02 THE RETURN OF HARD POWER: EUROPE, JAPAN, AND THE NEW REARMAMENT ERA

After the Cold War, Europe and East Asia settled into the same assumption: trade more, arm less, and trust economic interdependence to keep the peace. For decades, that stopped feeling like a gamble and started feeling permanent.

That confidence is fading. Europe is rearming at levels many governments had long moved away from, while Japan is reconsidering limits that shaped its military posture since 1945, including the export of advanced defence systems.

The reasons are fairly clear. Ukraine showed that large-scale war in Europe was not a relic of history. In Asia, the regional balance has grown more uneasy, while American security guarantees no longer feel as unquestioned as they once did.

What matters is not just the increase in spending. The broader calculation has changed. Military strength is no longer treated as a reluctant necessity, but as a strategic priority, and shifts like that are rarely easy to reverse.



01 CHARGING THE IMPOSSIBLE: WHEN PHYSICS BREAKS ITS OWN SPEED LIMITS

Australian researchers have built the world's first working quantum battery prototype, and it behaves unlike normal batteries. Instead of charging slower as systems get larger, quantum batteries theoretically charge faster with scale.

The effect comes from "super absorption," where the system absorbs energy collectively rather than gradually. In simple terms, adding more molecules can actually reduce charging time, the opposite of conventional lithium-ion batteries.

The prototype is still extremely small. It charges wirelessly using a laser and currently holds energy for only nanoseconds, far from practical consumer use. But researchers from CSIRO, the University of Melbourne, and RMIT University have now shown the concept works outside theory.

If the technology eventually scales, the implications could be major: near-instant phone charging, wireless charging across rooms, and electric vehicles refuelling faster than petrol cars. There is still a long way to go, but quantum batteries are no longer purely theoretical.



Quantum Battery Breakthrough:
90-Second Electric Car Charging

02 FROM WASTE TO WATTS: TURNING POLLUTION INTO POWER

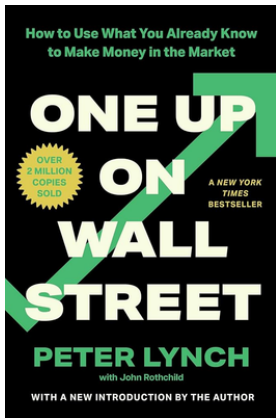
Plastic waste and clean energy rarely appear in the same conversation, but researchers now think sunlight could turn discarded plastic into hydrogen fuel, addressing two problems at once. The process, called solar-driven photoreforming, uses photocatalysts to break plastics down at low temperatures, producing clean-burning hydrogen and industrial chemicals. Teams from the University of Adelaide and the University of Cambridge have both demonstrated versions of the idea, with Cambridge even using acid recovered from old car batteries. The appeal is obvious. Countries with strong sunlight, expensive landfill costs, and growing hydrogen ambitions have reason to pay attention. More importantly, it changes how plastic waste is viewed. Environmentally, plastic is a problem. Chemically, it is stored carbon and hydrogen waiting to be used. The tech remains in the laboratory stage, but the principle works: sunlight in, plastic in, fuel out. That is a significant rethink of waste and energy.



MOVIE RECOMMENDATION

INTO THE WILD

Into the wild tells the story of Christopher McCandless who leaves behind his family, money and possessions to travel across America in search of freedom and deeper meaning of life. He works odd jobs, and meets people who influence his journey. Eventually, he retreats to the Alaskan wilderness, where isolation and lack of preparation lead to his tragic death. The film highlights the beauty of nature, the dangers of solitude, and the importance of human connection alongside independence.



BOOK RECOMMENDATION

ONE UP ON WALL STREET

One up on wall street Peter Lynch is about how ordinary investors can beat professional fund managers by using what they already know. Lynch explains that individual investors have an advantage because they notice products, companies, and trends in daily life before Wall Street analysts. The book talks about the basic idea that investing in business whose product you use. The book also talks about the importance of fundamentals of business and patience.

YOUTUBE RECOMMENDATION

ONE IDIOT- AN IDFC FOUNDATION INITIATIVE

The video talks about the importance of budgeting and starting investing early it also explains the compounding effect and how its significance increase with the duration of investment. It talks about one of the best way of passive investing which is dollar cost averaging or SIP (systematic investment plan). Overall the video is about how for the betterment its important to think about the long-term objective and start working toward them as soon as possible.



MUSIC RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Way down we go by KALEO
2. Luther by kendrick lamar & SZA
3. Ik kudi by wolf.cryman & arpit bala
4. Just the two of us by Kauai45 & Sweet cocoa
5. Chaudhary by mame khan

GUESS THE PERSONALITY

- The person who is still known as the King of Quant on Wall Street, famous for revolutionizing quantitative trading with his mathematical models.
- The person who earned his doctorate from the University of California, showcasing early signs of his exceptional analytical mind.
- The person who delivered one of the greatest returns in hedge fund history, averaging around 60% annually before fees.
- The person who even worked as a spy during the Cold War before stepping into the world of finance and building a legendary reputation.



Answers of the previous edition

Personality: Walt Disney

Company: Hermès



GUESS THE COMPANY

- It is the company that owns almost everything when it comes to businesses, with stakes in thousands of global firms.
- It is often referred to as Wall Street's shadow government because of its immense influence on global finance.
- At one point, the company was even the largest landlord in the world, owning massive amounts of real estate through its investments.
- One of its founders once compared the government to Hitler due to outrage over high taxation policies.
- Its Annual General Meeting is famously known as "The Oscars of Finance", attracting investors and media from all over the world.

ANSWERS IN THE NEXT EDITION

JARGONS DECODED

FFF funding

FFF funding stands for Friends, Family, and Fools funding, which is the very first stage of financing for a startup. At this stage, entrepreneurs raise money from people they personally know—friends, family, or other early supporters willing to take a big risk. The amounts are usually small, agreements are informal, and investors are essentially betting on the founder's vision rather than a proven business model. This funding helps the startup get off the ground before approaching formal investors like angel investors or venture capitalists.

Lipstick effect

The Lipstick Effect is an economic theory suggesting that during an economic downturn, consumers cut back on expensive discretionary purchases but still indulge in small affordable luxuries, such as high-end lipstick. On the stock market, this phenomenon can lead to the stocks of companies selling these cosmetics products showing unexpected resilience or even growth, which work as a hedge sometimes.

MYTH BUSTERS

Uniqueness is essential for a good Startup

Uniqueness isn't essential to start a successful business — execution matters more than originality. Many top Indian startups like Ola, Zomato, and Swiggy were inspired by Western models such as Uber, Yelp, and DoorDash. What set them apart was how they adapted these ideas to Indian consumers — focusing on local delivery challenges, pricing, and preferences. Success in business often comes not from inventing something new but from innovating within an existing idea to suit the market better.

Debt is always bad

Debt isn't always bad; it depends on how and why it's used. When borrowed funds are invested in assets or projects that generate a higher return than the cost of borrowing, debt becomes a tool for growth. eg you took a loan for an asset which gave return more than the interest rate on the debt than it helped you grow rather than deteriorating your financial health.

FORTUNE'S FABLES

Square yards

Square Yards was founded in 2013 by Tanuj Shori and Kanika Gupta Shori, began as a solution for NRIs and Indians struggling with the fragmented real estate market and brokers commission. The platform now offers end-to-end services, including property search, mortgages, brokerage, interiors, rentals, and data intelligence. Over the years, it has expanded globally and strengthened its offerings through acquisitions like PropsAMC, Azuro. Today, Square Yards reported revenues of over ₹1,400 crore in FY25, and is gearing up for an IPO at a valuation of \$1.5–2 billion.

“Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.”

— Winston Churchill

Thank you for reading!

**Hope you enjoyed the content.
Stay tuned for the next edition!**

