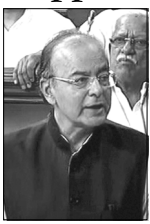


## Parliament approves Finance Bill 2017

**NEW DELHI, MARCH 30** /-/- The Parliament on Thursday approved the Finance Bill 2017 after the Lok Sabha rejected five amendments moved to it by the Upper House with regard to curbing more powers to taxmen and a cap on donation by companies to political parties.

Winding up the debate on amendments passed by the Rajya Sabha, Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said they cannot be accepted by the government, but invited suggestions from taggati parties, including the Congress and the BJD, to make electoral funding more clean and transparent. The Lok Sabha later rejected the Rajya Sabha amendments by a voice vote, thus passing the Finance Bill 2017 and



completing the budgetary exercise for 2017-18. Jaitley said most of the donations that come to political parties now are from unclean money and there was complete non-transparency. Defending the budget proposal, he said it is not possible for the

government to accept the amendment as it would limit the number of donors to political parties. "The harsh reality is we continue to do politics on the basis of unclean money because if we do it on the basis of declared money... somebody will write an editorial and will have a problem with every solution we offer," Jaitley said.

Today we have given the option of receiving donations by cheque -- there is total transparency it is clean money. Small donations by cash less than Rs 2,000. You can receive donations online too. And do it by bonds which is clean money," he said. With regard to the taxation amendments proposed by the Rajya Sabha, he said the current position will continue and the

## GST Bills passed

**NEW DELHI:** The historic Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime on Wednesday came a step closer to meet its July 1 target of roll out, with the Lok Sabha approving four supplementary legislations. The Central GST Bill, 2017; The Integrated GST Bill, 2017; The GST Compensation to States) Bill, 2017; and The Union Territory GST Bill, 2017 were passed after negotiation of a host of amendments moved by the opposition parties. Replying to the seven-hour-long debate, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said the GST, which will usher in a uniform indirect tax regime in the country, will make commodities "slightly cheaper".

Jaitley said once the new regime is implemented, the harassment of businesses by different authorities will end and India will become a commodity throughout the country. He said the GST Council, comprising Finance Minister Arun Jaitley and 14 states and union territories, had agreed to take a decision on bringing real estate within the ambit of the new tax regime a year of its rollout. On the impact of GST on prices, Jaitley said: "Today you will become slightly cheaper." On what the Council has decided on multiple GST rates, Jaitley said one rate would be "slightly regressive" as "hawai chappal and BMW cannot be taxed at the same rate". He said currently food items are taxed at a rate zeroed under the GST. All other commodities will be taxed at the nearest tax bracket. (PTI)

## Citizens can fly high now, 128 new air routes under UDAN

**NEW DELHI, MARCH 30** /-/- Five airlines will operate on 128 routes under the regional connectivity scheme wherein fares are capped at Rs 2,500 for one-hour flights.

Over 45 unserved and under-served airports would be connected under the scheme - UDAN (Ude Desh ki Awaaz) that seeks to make flying more affordable. Announcing the names of winning bidders and the routes, Civil Aviation Secretary R N Choubey today said 128 routes are being awarded to 22 operators. The operators are Air India subsidiary Airline Allied Services, SpiceJet, Air Deccan, Air Odisha and Turbo Mega. They would be operating 19-78 seater aircraft. The airports that



would be connected under UDAN include Bhatinda, Pudukchery and Shimla. On each flight, 50 per cent of the seats would have a cap of Rs 2,500 per seat/hour, Choubey said. Under UDAN, the operators would be extended viability gap funding. The amount is estimated to be around Rs 205 crore per annum for the operators chosen in the first round of bidding, Choubey added.

Minister of State for Civil Aviation Jayant Sinha said the scheme provides for various benefits including no airport charges and three-year exclusivity on the routes. (PTI)



Minister of State for Development of North Eastern Region (I/C), Prime Minister's Office, Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh launching the e-Service Book of DoPT, in New Delhi. Additional Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, Dr. P.K. Mishra, the Cabinet Secretary P.K. Sinha and the Vigilance Commissioner Shri Rajiv are also seen. PIB

## Stamping, tagging officers hand baggage to end from Apr 1, CISF

**NEW DELHI, MARCH 30** /-/- Stamping and tagging of the hand baggage of fliers at seven major airports, including Delhi and Mumbai, will be done away with from April 1, the CISF said on Thursday. The other airports which will see the new system of baggage security coming in include the ones in Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Cochin and Ahmedabad.

"The system of stamping and putting tags on the hand baggage of fliers will be dispensed with from April 1 at seven airports. We have put in place the required security systems that will help us in ushering in this passenger-friendly move," CISF Director General O P Singh told PTI.

The move, the CISF chief said, will enhance "passenger experience and provide hassle free security environment to them". The move was earlier announced by the aviation security regulator, the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS), but the Central Industrial Security Force wanted to deploy appropriate security infrastructure before such a regime could be ushered in without any compromise on the security aspect of these sensitive facilities. Singh said his personnel have been updated about the new protocol and that he himself had seen the preparations made in this regard at the Bengaluru airport yesterday.

## CEAT ranks highest in India for OE tyre customer satisfaction

### Halol Plant gets 'Sword of Honor' award

**KOLKATA, MARCH 30** /-/- CEAT Ltd had been ranked highest in India for OE Tyre customer satisfaction, according to the J.D. Power 2017 India Original Equipment Tyre Customer Satisfaction Index (TCSI) Study released recently.

CEAT ranked highest in overall customer satisfaction, with a score of 893 (on a 1,000-point scale), and performed well in the appearance factor. Interestingly, owing to constant thrust on quality standards, the company has had five big ticket OEM entries in the past two years including Mahindra TUV 300 and Wagon R. It

also developed three new patterns for OE. Speaking on the occasion, Arnab Banerjee, ED- Operations, CEAT said, "CEAT stands by the promise of making mobility safer and smarter every day. For that, we ensure that our efforts go into making the safest products for our customers. We are able to provide superior quality products due to the extensive testing conducted in our in-house objective testing facility which also houses new simulation technology for predictive testing. The survey acts as a testament to CEAT's product and service offerings and going forward we will always be committed to enhancing the customer experience with the brand." A press release from JD Power

quoted Director Kaustav Roy saying, "Since the brand reputation is a key driver when considering replacement Tyres, it may be prudent for the Tyre manufacturers to better engage with customer experience and vehicle ownership. A positive product experience, coupled with sustained customer engagement, is likely to help drive the replacement demand."

The 2017 India Original Equipment Tyre Customer Satisfaction Index or TCSI study is based on 3,346 responses from new vehicle owners who purchased their vehicle between May 2014 and August 2016. The study was fielded between May and August 2016.

## Honda launches 2017 edition of DIO

**KOLKATA/NEW DELHI, MARCH 30** /-/- Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India Pvt. Ltd. (HMSI) launched the new 2017 edition of its youthful moto-scooter DIO with new style, colours, convenience and BS-IV and AHO compliance.

Launched in 2002, Honda's Dio moto-scooter merges the aggressive looks of motorcycle with convenience of a scooter. Dio customer family is now over 17.5 lakh strong. Commenting on the new Dio, Yadinder Singh Guleria, Senior Vice President - Sales & Marketing, Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India

Pvt. Ltd said, "The new 2017 edition of Dio is all about celebrating the spirit of youth who want to live life their way. The 2017 edition of DIO gets a complete style makeover with its new LED position lamp, contrasting dual tone colour body, bolder sportier graphics and 2 new colours. With more convenience of mobile charging socket and compliance with both BS-IV emission norms and AHO, the new 2017 edition of Dio is fresher than ever before and the perfect partner for trend setting youngsters of today."

## BJP to promote Centre's pro-farmer policies

**NEW DELHI, MARCH 30** /-/- The BJP's farmers' wing will hold a series of events across the country between April 6 and 14 to publicise the "pro-farmer" measures taken by the Modi government.

The "Kisan Morcha" took the decision today in a meeting of the BJP's office-bearers following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's directive to reach out to people to promote the government's policies during the outfit's foundation day and Bhim Rao Ambedkar's birth anniversary.

## India Yamaha Motor introduces BSIV scooters, motorcycles

**KOLKATA/NEW DELHI, MARCH 30** /-/- India Yamaha Motor Pvt. Ltd. announces the new variants of its range of motorcycles and scooters. The newly launched models are all compliant to Bharat Stage IV (BS IV) energy efficiency standards. The engine specifications of the various variants with extra style and Fazer FI remains unchanged with the same 149 cc, air cooled, 4-stroke, SOHC, 2-valve, single cylinder, fuel-injected engine based on the Blue Core Engine Development ideal on a high weight frame whereas SZ RR will continue with a 149 cc, air cooled, 4-stroke, SOHC, 2-valve, single cylinder carburetor engine. India Yamaha Motor Pvt. Ltd. has launched the BS IV upgraded engine variants Alpha for its bestselling scooters in vibrant color schemes and graphics to create more excitement amongst customers. The Fascino range has been introduced in refreshing colors whereas Cygnus Alpha is introduced in both disc brake and drum brake variants.

Roy Kurian, Vice President, Sales & Marketing, Yamaha Motor India Sales Pvt. Ltd, said, "The new motorcycle and scooter variants with extra style and advanced BS IV compliant engine offers more value to the aspirational customers of Yamaha. The new variants get the Auto Headlamp-On (AHO) feature which the government has made mandatory for all two wheelers in India." (EOIC)

## BookMyShow partners with Ola

**KOLKATA/BENGALURU, MARCH 30** /-/- Ola, mobile app for transportation, and BookMyShow, online entertainment ticketing platform, have entered into an exclusive partnership to enhance the entertainment experience of users. Users across the country, who also have the Ola mobile app, will now be able to book a cab, superior and convenient experience that benefits our consumers the most."

Mazid Kallantwala, Vice President, Business Intelligence and Marketing, BookMyShow said, "At BookMyShow, we are constantly looking to add value to enhance, enrich and improve user experience on our platform. Our integration with Ola is aimed at offering a convenient solution to a critical need of our users that is related to commuting to and from the entertainment destination of their choice. As we look at expanding our reach, we would continue to engage in such strategic and relevant partnerships to increase our value proposition to our

button, offline booking, and can pay seamlessly using Ola Money Anuj Sahay, Vice President, Alliances at Ola said, "We have forged mutually beneficial partnerships with likeminded companies to offer seamless service to our discerning consumers. BookMyShow has redefined how the country consumes entertainment events and movies; and we are thrilled to be working on this platform. Our superior and convenient experience that benefits our consumers the most."

## Users can now book a ride

-Micro, Mini, Prime or Lux, right after booking tickets for a movie, play, event or concert on BookMyShow.

After booking tickets on BookMyShow, users will be able to 'Book an Ola' or 'Schedule an Ola', depending on the time remaining to the movie show or event. Once the desired option is selected, users will be automatically redirected to the Ola app to confirm the cab booking. Commuters will have access to Ola key features including driver details, ride estimate, ride tracking, in trip navigation, SOS

## Discounts galore as 2-wheeler firms offload BS-III models

**NEW DELHI, MARCH 30** /-/- Two-wheeler majors Hero MotoCorp, HMSI, Bajaj Auto and Suzuki Motorcycle are offering discounts of up to Rs 22,000 on BS-III models to liquidate stocks, a day after the Supreme Court banned sale and registration of such vehicles from April 1.

With 6.71 lakh two-wheelers, out of over 6 lakh BS-III vehicles impacted by the ban, dealers said the immediate effort is to sell as many units as possible before the deadline. One offering "unheard of discounts" in the industry. Honda Motorcycle and Scooter India (HMSI), which had initially offered a flat discount of Rs 10,000 on its BS-III scooters and motorcycles increased it to Rs 22,000 later in the day. The company said it is offering cash back offer of up to Rs 22,000 on its BS-III scooters and motorcycles models Activa 3G (priced Rs 56,500), Dream Tuga (Rs 51,741), CB Shine (Rs 57,799 to Rs 61,283) and CD 110DX (Rs 47,202 to Rs 47,494). Market leader Hero MotoCorp offered discounts of up to Rs 12,500 on its BS-III two-wheelers. According to dealers, the company is offering rebate of Rs 12,500 on its scooters, Rs 7,500 on premium bikes and Rs 5,000 on entry level mass market motorcycles. The models on which discounts are offered include scooters Duet (priced Rs 49,480) and Maestro Edge (Rs 51,030), motorcycles Glamour (Rs 52,755) and Splendor 125 (Rs 55,575). Another two-wheeler maker Suzuki Motorcycle India also announced offers on its Let's scooter and Gixxer motorcycle. On the scooter, Let's priced (Rs 47,272 to Rs 52,766), the company offered a discount of Rs 4,000 plus a free helmet, while on Gixxer (Rs 77,452 to Rs 90,421) the benefit is up to Rs 5,000 with exchange benefits of up to Rs 2,000. All prices are ex-showroom

said the offer will be valid till the end of last or up to March 31.

"These are unheard of discounts ever in the two-wheeler," He industry," Federation of Automobile Dealers (FADA) past president and Director-General of the association Nijun Sanghi said. When asked about what actions were dealers taking the offer, he said: "Our energy is focused on selling as much stock as possible before the deadline. Our people are calling up potential customers informing them about the offers." He said the dealership community was hoping for some relief from the court in the form of more time to sell their stocks but with that not happening, the focus has shifted to liquidating the stocks. Afterwards, it will have to be discussed with the manufacturers what to do with the unsold inventories, if at all any are left, he added. (PTI)

Delhi. Bajaj Auto also offered discounts and free insurance on its different models, starting from the entry level Pulsar to Pulsar RS200 in the range of Rs 3,000 to Rs 12,000 along with free insurance.

"If there are any unsold inventory left, we have the possibility to export as we are a big exporter to around 70 countries across the world," Bajaj Auto President (Business Development & Assurance) S Ravikumar told PTI. The companies

## Oil cost told to stop plying BS-I, BS-II vehicles in NCR

**NEW DELHI:** The National Green Tribunal Thursday directed petrol sector or oil companies to stop plying Bharat Stage-I and Bharat Stage-II vehicles for transporting petrol or petroleum products in the national capital.

A bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Swatanter Kumar ordered Indian Oil Corporation Limited, Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd and Hindustan Petroleum to immediately ban such vehicles. The green panel also directed the joint commissioner of police to ensure the compliance of the order. The green bench had in December last year issued notices to the oil companies and asked them to inform whether they use any diesel vehicle more than a decade old for transporting petrol or diesel to fuel stations. The direction came while hearing a batch of petitions filed by various contractors seeking registration of new BS-IV compliant diesel vehicles purchased for transport of petrol from company depots to identified petrol pumps in Delhi-NCR. In a blow to automobile firms, the Supreme Court had yesterday banned sale and registration of vehicles, which are not BS-IV compliant, in India from April 1 when the new emission norms come into force.

## System to monitor rural devt schemes in place: Govt

**NEW DELHI, MARCH 30** /-/- The Union government has evolved a comprehensive multi-level and multi-tool system for monitoring implementation of various rural development schemes across the country, Lok Sabha was informed on Thursday.

Union Minister of State for Rural Development Ram Kripal Yadav said in order to ensure that the programme benefits reach the rural poor in full measure, the government has evolved a comprehensive multi-level and multi-tool system of monitoring and evaluating rural development programmes in different parts of the country. These include review by the union ministers, performance review committee meetings, state vigilance and monitoring committees, district development coordination and monitoring committees, submission of periodic reports by third party monitoring through national level monitors, area officers schemes, concurrent evaluation, impact assessment studies, monitoring the submission of reports by the states on their absorption capacity and utilisation of available funds. The Ministry constantly pursues the issue of fund utilisation with state governments and UT administrations through performance review committee meetings to ensure optimum utilisation of funds and to ensure timely disbursement and sound financial management, he said. (PTI)

## BHEL commissions 2nd unit of Yeramarus plant in Karnataka

**NEW DELHI, MARCH 30** /-/- State-run power equipment maker BHEL Thursday said it has commissioned the second 800-MW unit of Yeramarus thermal plant in Karnataka. The company had commissioned the first unit of 2x800 MW Yeramarus thermal power station located in Richchikristur, Karnataka in March last, BHEL said in a statement. The project has been developed by Raichur Power Corporation Limited and commissioned by the supercritical boiler and turbine generators along with associated civil works and some of the balance of plant (BoP) packages.