MARKET WATCH

	27-09-2017	% CHANGE
Sensex	31,160	-1.39
US Dollar	65.72	-0.41
Gold	31,000	0.71
Brent oil	57.86	-0.95

NIFTY 50		
		CHANGE
ACC		
Adani Ports		
Ambuja Cements	262.40	1.10
Asian Paints	1160.00	14.00
Aurobindo Pharma.	689.70	-19.65
Axis Bank	506.30	-5.65
Bajaj Auto	3031.25.	13.65
Bank of Baroda	138.50	-4.15
Bharti Airtel	385.95	-1.40
Bosch	21112.55.	-383.05
BPCL	465.60	-3.65
Cipla	570.10	-8.90
Coal India	260.85	0.45
Dr Reddys Lab	2304.70.	-66.05
Eicher Motors	30470.20.	357.05
GAIL (India)	399.75	0.95
HCL Tech		
HDFC		
HDFC Bank		
Hero MotoCorp		
Hindalco		
Hind Unilever		
Indiabulls HFL		
ICICI Bank		
IndusInd Bank		
Bharti Infratel		
Infosys		
Indian OilCorp		
ITC		
Kotak Bank		
L&T		
Lupin		
M&M		
Maurti Suzuki		
NTPC		
ONGC		
PowerGrid Corp		
Reliance Ind		
State Bank		
Sun Pharma		
Tata Motors		
Tata Motors DVR		
Tata Power		
Tata Steel		
TCS		
Tech Mahindra		
UltraTech Cement		
	310.35	/ .90
Vedanta Wipro		

EXCHANGE RATES				
Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on September 27				
CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL		
US Dollar	65.51	65.83		
Euro	76.93	77.31		
British Pound	87.87	88.30		
Japanese Yen (100).	58.03	58.31		
Chinese Yuan	9.87	9.92		
Swiss Franc	67.21	67.55		
Singapore Dollar	48.19	48.43		
Canadian Dollar	52.86	53.12		
Malaysian Ringitt	15.51	15.61		
Sourco Indian Pank				

Zee Entertainment 524.00 -0.90

Bharti to join telecom firms in spending ₹50,000 cr. this year

Industry's largest player plans to invest ₹18,000-₹20,000 crore on infrastructure

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

India's largest telecom player Bharti Airtel is investing ₹18,000-₹20,000 crore this year in building hard infrastructure and the industry as a whole is likely to invest anywhere between ₹50.000 ₹60,000 crore in 2017-18, according to Bharti Airtel chairman Sunil Mittal.

Mooting a collaborative approach between telecom players, including Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Jio, in areas such as shared telecom towers and fibre networks, Mr. Mittal said on Wednesday that government policies must make it easier for telecom companies to do business in order to expedite the impact of these investments.

Terming data as the 'new oil' that India does not need to import, Mr. Ambani, who shared the stage with Mr. Mittal at the maiden India Mobile Congress in the capital, said while the country may have missed out on the last three industrial revolutions, it was well well-poised to take the lead in the fourth one fuelled by data, connectivity and artificial intelligence.

'Data super abundance'

"We have data in super abundance," said Mr. Ambani. "It will be a new source of value and will create opportunities and prosperity for India and millions of Indians," he said, adding he saw India's economy expanding to \$7 trillion in 10 years, from the current level of \$2.5 trillion.

"Data is the oxygen of a digital economy. We cannot deprive Indians of this vital life-sustaining resource. We have to provide ubiquitous access to high-speed data at affordable prices," the Reliance Industries chairman

Network efficiency: IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, flanked by Telecom Minister Manoj Sinha, left, and Bharti Airtel chairman Sunil Mittal at the India Mobile Congress. • RAMESH SHARMA

said, predicting that India's 4G coverage would become larger than 2G coverage in the next 12 months.

"There's generally an accusation on the Indian industry for the last two or three years that we don't invest enough," Mr. Mittal said at the inaugural session of the Congress, where Oil and Skill Development Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, Electronics and IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad and Telecom Minister Manoj Sinha were present. "Partly, I will concede you are right. But the telecom industry in particular is an exception."

"My own company Airtel has put in about ₹10,000 crore upto September this year on hard infrastructure. This year, we plan to put in ₹18,000-₹20,000 crore investment, Mukesh (Ambani) is putting up a lot of investment and I am sure other telecom players are as well. So nearly ₹50,000-₹60,000 crore is going in this year to build hard digital infrastructure," he said.

Though the government

had eased right of way norms and opened up central government buildings for telecom towers, Mr. Mittal said that getting permissions at the ground level was still a

"State governments, municipalities and local authorities must understand the power of Digital India and support what we are trying to do, as per the vision of the Prime Minister," he added.

slow process

Admitting that the industry faced challenges, Mr. Mittal said that he was confident that India would be the biggest telecom market in the world with its large population and the PM's belief in using digital platforms to serve the people.

'None can do it alone'

"Clearly, as Mukesh pointed out, none of us can do it alone. We all have to come together while we compete alone for the benefit of customers, we have to collaborate among ourselves to create the ecosystem using common fibres, common towers and so on," he said, adding that India would no longer be behind the curve on the adoption of new telecom technologies such as 5G.

Mr. Ambani also stressed on the need to collaborate and said India provided enough opportunities for "all of us to grow and prosper together."

'To realise the Digital India dream to the fullest, we have to start by becoming the change that we seek to create...We must break silos and forge partnerships. No corporate, nor the government, can do it alone. Together, we can achieve the unimaginable," Mr. Ambani

Vodafone group CEO Vittorio Colao hinted at the poor financial health of the industry and said that it was essential the telecom sector "is in good health" to realise India's full potential as a superpower. "Indian consumers have a very strong appetite for data services but still over half a billion people have not connected to the Internet and these are a great opportunity for all," he said.

EPFO gets notice under GST

PF body says it is exempted from service tax since April '16

SOMESH JHA

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) Intelligence unit has slapped a notice on the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) for defaulting on payment of service tax and has sought to examine the PF department's records till 2016-17.

The EPFO, however, told Revenue authorities that the PF office was exempted from paying service tax from April 2016 and hence, its services were exempt from any levy under the new indirect tax system. On July 25, the Directorate General of GST Intelligence wrote to the EPFO headquarters informing about a probe into non-payment of service tax between July 2012 and March 2016.

It had sought for overall records of all its regional and zonal offices and issued separate notices to EPFO's different offices. "EPFO has



EPF is not a 'banking and financial service', the Labour Ministry had argued.

been granted exemption from the levy of service tax-.with effect from 1 April 2016. Therefore, requisition of records up to 31 March 2017 may not be justified," the EPFO wrote in a missive to the GST Intelligence unit on September 14.

"Similarly, the exemption has continued under GST Act, by placing EPFO in the

In its letter, it further challenged the demand for levy of service tax on statutory administration charges and interest charged by EPFO. The EPFO cited an order dated April 13 from the Customs, Excise and Service Tax

negative list," it added.

Appellate Tribunal which said that it was not liable to pay service tax on the statutory activities performed under the Employees' Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1952. As the service tax exemp-

tion came into effect from April 2016, the Labour and Employment which has administrative charge of the EPFO, earlier this year asked the Finance Ministry to extend the relaxation retrospectively. The ministry had argued that the EPF was a social security scheme and did not come in the category of 'banking and

Jio thanks TRAI chief Sharma

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

While incumbent operators sought an urgent intervention by the Telecom Ministry on TRAI's recent decision to slash charges for cross-network calls, Reliance Jio, which has gained from the move, thanked TRAI chairman R.S. Sharma at the India Mobile Congress here.

"I have never met the gentleman R.S. Sharma, but thank you, wherever you are," said Mathew Oommen, president - network, global strategy and service development, Jio. Idea Cellular MD Himanshu Kapania said TRAI's decision was pushing the industry to just one technology option.

Sensex logs losses for seventh straight day

Domestic, global issues dog market

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The benchmark Sensex fell for the seventh consecutive session on Wednesday making it the longest losing streak since December last year as investors remained jittery with the rupee also weakening further. A slowdown in Goods & Services Tax collection and its impact on the economy also acted as a catalyst.

The BSE's 30-share Sensex, which opened 185 points higher, nosedived and remained in the red for most part of the trading session. It lost 439.95 points, or 1.39%, to close at 31,159.81. The benchmark index has lost 1,264 points since September 19. The broader Nifty of the National Stock Exchange fell 135.75 points to close at 9,735.75.

Among the 30 constituents of the Sensex, as many as 28 ended the day in the red. ICICI Bank, Adani Ports, Reliance Industries, Sun Pharmaceutical, State Bank of India and Dr. Reddys Laboratories all lost in the range of 1-5% each.

Market participants attributed the recent slide to a mix of concerns related to domestic macro-economic factors and global geo-political issues. Technical analysts said that the current trend hinted at a further fall with the Nifty headed below 9,700 levels.

+ India woos SMEs in Britain

Scouts for 50 firms for investments as part of 'Access India'

VIDYA RAM

The Indian High Commission in London has begun an initiative to encourage small and medium sized British businesses to invest in India. in a renewed focus away from the larger firms that aims to match the success of the relationship between India and Germany which has seen strong partnerships in

The high commission is working to identify 50 companies that have the strength and interest in working in India initially that it can work with, as part of the Access India, which will provide necessary market entry support, and work with organisations such as the U.K. India Business Council.

Market entry support "This programme is de-

signed to provide market entry support services,



Y.K.Sinha

strategy advisory, legal and financial advisory, product financing, location services and mergers and acquisition advisory as well as support through the process of states and central government approval," said High Commissioner Y.K. Sinha at the event in London

He said that the defence, pharmaceutical and food sectors would be particularly ripe for investment under the programme.

'Negative risk'

There is a small negative risk but that is mainly in rail ways, atomic energy and gambling...in other sectors investment is welcome," Mr. Sinha said. "The SME sector is the

backbone of the U.K. but they don't have international exposure," said Deputy High Commissioner Dinesh Patnaik. "Every product in the U.K. has the potential to do well in India because the market is just so big. British SMEs can always have a small part of that huge market. Our idea is that if in one or two years we can have a few in the pipeline it can help others to follow." He added that the programme was likely to be rolled out to other countries

in the near future.

ICICI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

General Insurance Company recovered from initial losses to end more than 3% higher than the issue price of ₹661 in debut trade on

Wednesday. The stock listed at ₹650, down 1.66% from the issue price on the BSE. However, it later gathered momentum and gained 3.10% to settle at ₹681.55. During the day, it touched a high of ₹694, up 4.99%.

at ₹681.20, a gain of 3% against the issue price. The stock had debuted at ₹651.10, a discount of 1.49%

In terms of equity volume, 59.12 lakh shares

Lombard up 3% on debut

Shares of ICICI Lombard

At NSE, the stock closed

from the issue price.

of the company were traded on the BSE and more than 3 crore shares changed hands on the NSE.

'GST, PMLA may spur gold smuggling'

'Unaccounted sales likely to rise this season as customers try to buy without bills'

REUTERS

Gold smuggling in India, the world's second-biggest consumer of the metal, is likely to rise during the country's peak holiday season as buyers try to avoid paying a new sales tax and to dodge new transparency rules. In August, India moved to include gold sales under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The law makes it mandatory for jewellers to keep records of customers' personal identification numbers or tax code number for transactions above ₹50,000.

Rise in demand

Indian gold demand typically rises in the last three months of the year as consumers buy more for the wedding season as well as for festivals such as Diwali and Dussehra.

"The government implemented the PMLA rule but it didn't take efforts to popularise. Customers are not



records of customers for transactions above ₹50,000. •AFP

aware of the rule and are hesitating in giving necessary details," said Surendra Mehta, secretary of the India Bullion and Jewellers Association. "Unaccounted sale will rise in the festive season as some customers are trying to buy without bills."

The tax avoidance recalls unintended consequences of India's decision to raise import taxes on gold to 10% by August 2013.

The duty failed to curb de-'The new rule is turning

mand but revived smuggling networks which, the World

Gold Council estimates, imported 120 tonnes of gold in 2016, over one-fifth of total annual arrivals. out to be counterproductive. Instead of giving required

Gold House, a wholesaler in Kolkata.

The sales tax on gold rose to 3% from 1.2 % as part of a new nationwide sales tax regime that started on July 1.

"Jewellers are buying smuggled gold at discount in cash, then making jewellery and selling it to consumers without receipts," said Daman Prakash Rathod, director at wholesaler MNC Bullion in Chennai.

In India, less than 4% of the people pay income tax. Many tax evaders choose to park their illicit wealth in gold as it is nearly as liquid as currency in the country.

The new limit of ₹50,000 is too low and makes it mandatory to seek identification details of almost each customer, said Kumar Jain, vice president, Mumbai Jewellers Association. "The rule has hurt senti-

ments. Usually demand imdetails, customers are buying without proper receipts proves ahead of Dussehra to save tax," said Harshad but this year demand is very Ajmera, the proprietor of JJ weak," Mr. Jain said.

