

## Gold futures jump Rs 401 to Rs 43,067 per 10 gm



NEW DELHI: Five hundred gram gold bars, produced by Swiss manufacturer Argor Hebeus SA, sit in a storage tray in this arranged photograph at Aranyiac Kft in Budapest, Hungary, on Wednesday, July 20, 2016. (Image: Bloomberg)

Gold prices on Monday jumped Rs 401 to Rs 43,067 per 10 gram in futures trade as speculators increased their bets tracking positive trend overseas.

On the Multi Commodity Exchange, gold contracts for April traded

higher by Rs 401, or 0.94 per cent, to Rs 43,067 per 10 gram in a business turnover of 2,117 lots.

The yellow metal for June delivery edged up by Rs 406, or 0.95 per cent, to Rs 43,269 per 10 gram in a business turnover of 125 lots.

Fresh positions built up by participants on positive cues from global markets mainly led to rise in gold prices, analysts said.

Globally, gold prices rose 0.93 per cent to USD 1,664.20 per ounce in New York.

## China keeps churning out steel that no one wants to buy

NEW DELHI: China's steel-makers face their biggest crisis in years, with demand frozen as factories and construction sites fall silent. But they're still churning out metal.

The collapse in economic activity amid China's unprecedented measures to contain the coronavirus outbreak means there are few buyers of steel, which has sent prices tumbling and put margins under intense pressure. However it's difficult for most steel-makers in China to cut output drastically because blast furnaces are designed to run constantly, and reducing production to zero is usually a last resort. The result is millions of tons of steel piling up at

steel," Elizabeth Gaines, chief executive of Fortescue Metals Group Ltd, said on a call with reporters on Wednesday, referring to the blast-furnace producers that buy her company's iron ore. EAF mills have largely stopped production already, according to consultancies CRU Group and Kallanish Commodities Ltd.

China is the world's largest steelmaker and accounts for more than half of global output. The virus crisis has crippled the industry's supply chains, with the migrant workers that typically staff construction sites or drive trucks unable to return to work due to quarantine measures and move-



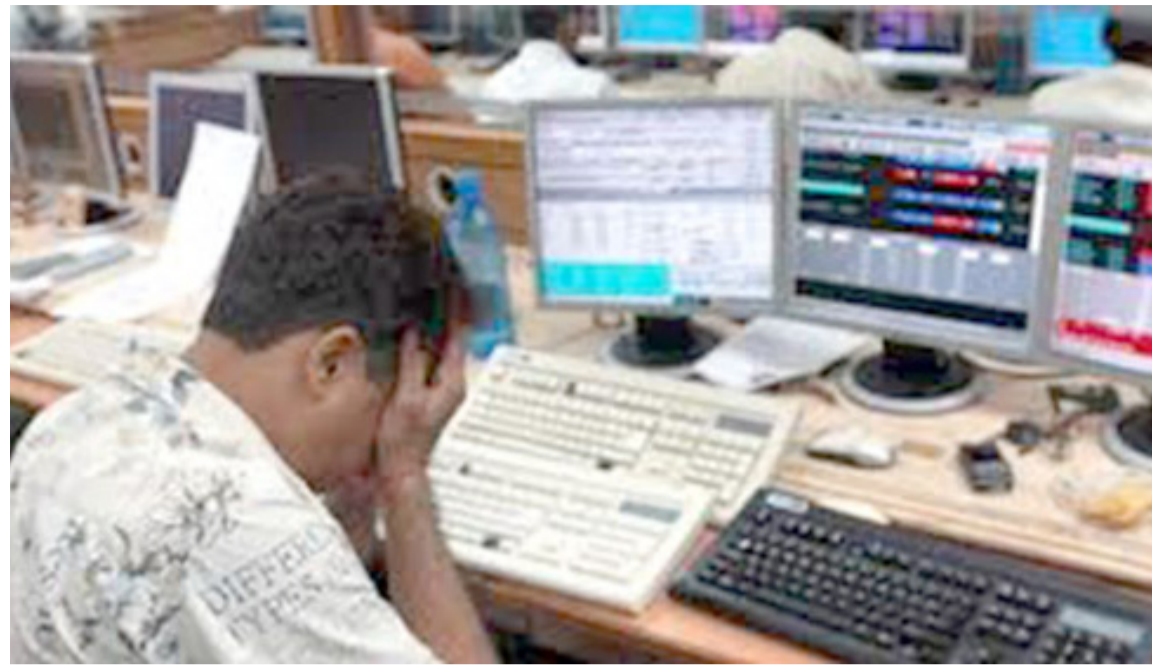
mills. "Inventories are at critically high levels," said Kevin Bai, an analyst at CRU Group. "Most mills are still trying to keep running for now though for technical reasons."

In China, a small number of steelmakers use electric arc furnaces, or EAFs, that remelt piles of scrap from old cars or torn-down buildings and turn it into fresh steel products. Those can be shut down quickly. The rest of the industry employs blast furnaces, huge and temperamental machines fed round-the-clock with iron ore, coking coal and other ingredients. Shutting those completely is an expensive and complex last resort.

"As far as we know, they're all still making

ment restrictions. Spot prices for steel rebar have tumbled to the lowest since 2017, while inventories surged to the highest in almost two years as mills struggle to dispatch finished products amid transport problems. Rebar futures were last at 3,450 yuan a ton in Shanghai, down about 3% this year.

Smelting rates in an ultra-hot furnace can be adjusted downwards but only to certain levels. The next and more complicated option is temporary hot-idling, which means keeping the furnace stoked and pausing steel-making. An outright shutdown -- letting it go cold -- normally only happens for a complete overhaul after many years of operation, or for permanent closure.



## Markets Crash As Virus Alarm Spreads Globally

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Indian stock benchmark Sensex on Monday sank nearly 807 points, the second-biggest single-day fall this year, tracking sell-off in global markets as coronavirus cases rose exponentially outside China.

Starting off on a weaker note, the BSE gauge plunged to a day's low of 40,306.36 after being caught in a panic selling as investors kept fretting over the reporting of a large number of new virus cases in South Korea, Italy and Iran.

The 30-share index finally settled at 40,363.23, dropping 806.89 points or 1.96 per cent -- the second-biggest one-day fall in 2020. The Sensex had plunged over 987 points on February 1 this year -- the day the Union Budget was presented.

While the broader NSE Nifty sank 251.45 points or 2.08 per cent to 11,829.40.

All Sensex components ended in the red, with Tata Steel cracking 6.39 per cent, followed by ONGC, Maruti, HDFC, Titan and ICICI Bank.

Sectorally, BSE metal index tumbled nearly 6 per cent, auto 3.39 per cent and telecom 3.33 per cent. All sectoral indices closed in the red.

In the broader market, BSE midcap and smallcap indices sank up to 1.60

per cent.

Globally, equities bore the brunt of worsening trading sentiment in the wake of rising virus cases on new regions other than China.

South Korea went on high alert on Sunday following a sharp jump in coronavirus cases, and Italy and Iran took their own drastic containment steps.

"Demand for safe-haven assets spiked as fresh coronavirus cases in South Korea and Italy indicated that business impact could be higher than thought earlier. The Trump-Modi meet is not providing clues to the market regarding trade deal but the market is hoping for some hint in the future," Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said.

Further, the IMF also warned that the deadly epidemic could put an already fragile global economic recovery at risk.

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Sunday said the coronavirus epidemic is the country's "largest public health emergency". The death toll from the deadly virus climbed to 2,592 in China on Monday.

Seoul stocks ended in deep red after South Korea reported 161 more coronavirus cases on Monday, taking the overall virus cases to 763 and

making it the world's largest total outside China.

Bourses in Shanghai, Tokyo and Hong Kong also closed with significant losses.

Stock exchanges in Europe sank in opening trade with Milan's FTSE MIB plunging over 4 per cent after Italy reported its fourth death from the virus as the number of people contracting the virus continued to mount.

Brent crude oil futures dropped over 4 per cent to USD 56.10 per barrel.

On the domestic front, investors were eyeing US President Donald Trump's two-day visit to India for further cues on the trade front. He reached Ahmedabad earlier in the day.

On the currency front, the Indian rupee was down 30 paise to 71.94 per US dollar.

Indian markets, which were relatively resilient till now have also started pricing in the impact of economic loss due to the spread of coronavirus with a steep fall in equity markets, experts said.

Indian corporates are expected to witness disruption in the supply chain as the manufacturing activities in China slows down considerably, they added.

## India reduced to lowly buyer, Congress on Trump's visit

NEW DELHI: Raising the pitch on the visit of US President Donald Trump, the Congress on Monday alleged that India has been reduced to a lowly buyer from America, rather than being a strategic partner.

"India has been reduced to a lowly buyer state from a strategic Partner. India has no role in Afghan Peace Process," said former Union Minister Manish Tewari.

General Atomics and other merchants of death," Tewari tweeted. The Congress said that in 3 years as US President, Donald Trump has gutted the Global Multilateral order, walked out of Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP), virtually torpedoed NATO, insulted America's closest allies, unleashed suppressed bigoted and racist tendencies in US. He prefers deals over vision.

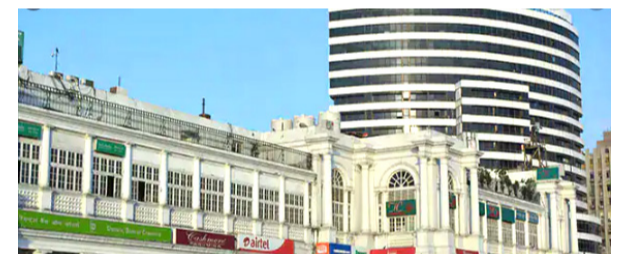


The Congress said that only gainers from the Trump's visit are arms manufacturers. 1/2 Only gainers of @realDonaldTrump 36 hour Tamasha commencing at noon today are going to be Boeing's, Lockheed Martin's, General Atomics & other merchants of death. India falls in between the cracks of."

"Only gainers of Trump 36-hour Tamasha commencing at noon today are going to be Boeing's, Lockheed Martin's,

Further commenting on Indo-US relations, Tewari said, "Pak Special Relationship is back on track. Quad China except for an airy fairy Blue Dot network there is nothing to counter BRI in substantive terms. US-Iran Tensions hurt Indian Oil Refineries the most. Quad is a complete non-starter. India falls in between the cracks of." In another tweet, Tewari said, "1/4 Cent-Com qua Paf-Com. Visit is a fluff. A Spectacularization of Diplomacy designed to detract from the fact that the NDA/BJP Govt has failed to secure India's interest.

## Adani gets Mandi House prime property for Rs 400 crore



NEW DELHI: The Adani Group will acquire a prime residential property near Mandi House in New Delhi after winning a bid to acquire Aditya Estates.

Adani won the bid through an insolvency process for a total deal value of Rs 400 crore. Aditya Estates holds a 3.4 acre of prime residential property near Mandi House. By all accounts, it is a bargain deal as similar properties have fetched a much higher price.

The principal bench of the National Company Law Tribunal has approved the resolution plan of Adani Properties to acquire Aditya Estates for Rs 265 crore. Another Rs 135 crore would go towards meeting the statutory charges, taking the total deal value to Rs 400 crore.

Aditya Estates's committee of creditors, led by ICICI Bank UK Plc, had already approved by 93.01 percent vote share Adani's Rs 400 crore offer, including an upfront payment of Rs 265 crore.

According to the list of applicants submitted in June last year, nine applicants had shown their interests for the property, including NR Narayana Murthy, Malvinder Singh, Anil Rai Gupta, Paras Pramod Agarwal, Dalmia Cement (Bharat), Veena Investments, Welspun Logistics, Adani Properties and Panch Tatva Promoters.

However, only two of them -- Adani Properties and Veena Investments -- had submitted their resolution plans.

The CoC rejected the Rs 225 crore offer from Veena Investments as it found it to be non-compliant and conditional. Besides, it did not take into account any liability that may arise from New Delhi Municipal Corporation for house tax, sales tax and income tax in the future.

Aditya Kumar Jajodia, a shareholder of Aditya Estates, challenged the insolvency proceedings against the firm in NCLAT but his plea was rejected. — IANS

## Stocks, oil prices tumble on pandemic fears, as gold soars

Press Trust Of India

LONDON: World stock markets and oil prices tumbled Monday, with Milan and Seoul falling hardest on growing fears of a coronavirus pandemic, as gold hit a seven-year peak on safe-haven buying, dealers said.

In late morning deals, Milan's stock market dived almost five per cent following reports of a fourth death amid the COVID-19 epidemic, an 84-year old man in the northern Lombardy region.

It was the third death in Lombardy, where villages have been sealed off and security measures enforced to stem the spread of the disease. Traders' screens were awash with red elsewhere in Europe too, with Frankfurt falling 3.7 per cent, London losing 3.5 per cent, Madrid down 3.3 per cent and Paris



shedding 3.8 per cent. Brent oil prices slumped four per cent as the burgeoning crisis sparked global energy demand worries.

Conversely, on the London Bullion Market gold surged to USD 1,689.31 per ounce -- a level last seen in January 2013 -- as investors snapped up the precious metal as a safety measure amid the market turbulence.

"Fears over an escalation of the coronavirus outside

of China have caused a major retreat in global markets and prompted wild swings in commodity prices," said AJ Bell investment director Russ Mould.

"Italy's lockdown, as the country tries to control the worst outbreak of the virus in Europe, has caused investors to panic about how business and society will be affected. A large spike in coronavirus cases in South Korea has also added to market concerns. "The re-

sult is a large sell-off in equities with... Europe and Asia deeply in the red," Mould added. Seoul nose-dived 3.9 per cent as South Korea announced a surge in COVID-19 infections, while Hong Kong erased 1.8 per cent but Shanghai retreated by only 0.3 per cent.

With the outbreak showing little sign of easing, investors are increasingly concerned it could have a much longer-term impact on the world economy.

Traders had been broadly optimistic that the virus -- which has killed nearly 2,600 and infected 80,000 -- was being contained outside China but a spurt of infections and deaths in other countries including South Korea, Italy and Iran has fanned fears of a global outbreak.

### NEWS MAKERS

## Maruti Suzuki launches petrol version of Vitara Brezza at Rs 7.34 lakh

NEW DELHI: The country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India on Monday launched the petrol version of its popular compact SUV Vitara Brezza priced between Rs 7.34 lakh and Rs 11.4 lakh (ex-showroom Delhi).

The BS-VI petrol Vitara Brezza is powered by 1.5-litre K-series engine with five-speed manual and automatic transmission options with smart hybrid, the company said in a statement.

The new petrol Vitara Brezza was unveiled at the Auto Expo 2020 held earlier this month.

"Keeping up with its strong, urban and premium appeal, the all-new Vitara Brezza is bolder, sportier and more powerful. We are confident that the all-new Vitara Brezza will take forward

the rich legacy of its predecessor with overwhelming customer response," Maruti Suzuki India Managing Director & CEO Kenichi Ayukawa said.

With the company deciding to exit diesel engine in the wake of BS-VI emission norms coming into effect from April 1, the

diesel version is being phased out.

Launched in 2016, with diesel engine only, the Vitara Brezza helped Maruti Suzuki establish itself as leader in utility vehicle segment. In less than four years of its launch it has sold over 5 lakh units, the company said. PTI



## Volkswagen T-ROC Finally Gets A Launch Date For India

NEW DELHI: The month of March will see multiple high-profile Volkswagen launches. Shortly after announcing the launch of the Tiguan Allspace for March 6, the carmaker has confirmed that the T-ROC SUV will be launched on March 18.

Volkswagen's answer to the Jeep Compass, Tata Harrier, Hyundai Creta and the upcoming Skoda Karoq debuted at Auto Expo 2020. It will be brought in via the CBU route. At the front, it gets a slatted grill, integrated LED headlamps, LED DRLs, and air dams with swanky surrounds. Other exterior highlights include flared wheel arches, stylish alloy wheels, a raked tailgate, and split

LED tail lamps. It measures 4,234mm long, 1,819mm wide, 1,573mm tall, and has a wheelbase of 2,590mm. This makes it slightly smaller than the Jeep Compass and Skoda Karoq.

Inside, the T-ROC sports a Jetta/Passat-like cabin with features such as an 8-inch infotainment system with Android Auto and Apple CarPlay, dual-zone climate control, a panoramic sunroof, and connected car tech. Safety features on offer are six airbags, ABS with EBD, front and rear parking sensors, a rearview camera, and electronic stability program.

Under the hood, it will be powered by a 1.5-litre TSI en-



gine producing 150PS of power, coupled with a 7-speed DSG gearbox. The SUV will not have a TDI diesel engine

option as Skoda Auto Volkswagen India will have a petrol-only portfolio in the initial phase of the BS6 era.