Wage strike expected to hit ATMs

Industry players said public-sector banks could be worst impacted by cash-loading stir

MANOJIT SAHA
Mumbai, 13 July

A strike by cash replenishment staff employed by cash management companies such as CMS Info Systems and Hitachi Payment Services in some northern states is expected to affect cash loading in automated teller machines (ATMs), bankers said.

According to sources, the cash-loading staff are demanding a wage revision in Delhi, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh. The strike, which is already under way, may also affect some southern states, including Karnataka. "The strike is likely to impact cash loading in vendor-managed ATMs. As a result, ATMs in some of these states may run out of cash in the coming days," said an official of a public-sector bank (PSB).

The strike may also affect some southern states, including Karnataka

The total number of ATMs, including white-label ATMs, is around 250,000.

Queries sent to CMS and Hitachi did not elicit a response until the time of going to press.

Industry players said the strike is the result of a standoff between banks and cash management companies.

In a letter to the Indian Banks' Association last month, the Confederation of ATM Industry (CATMi) said the ATM network is under strain and urged banks to engage directly with operators to resolve the issues before "damage becomes structural".

Industry players said PSBs, with their large ATM networks, could be the worst affected by the strike.

CATMi had said the new wage code has reset the statutory wage base, while fuel prices have been hiked multiple times since the price freeze was lifted in May 2026. The association estimated a near-term increase in operating costs of around 20 per cent.

The association also said monthly ATM cash withdrawals fell from 570 million in January 2023 to 484.3 million in January 2025 — a cumulative decline of 14 per cent over two years.

Breweries association urges Bihar to lift alcohol ban

SHARLEEN D'SOUZA
Mumbai, 13 July

The Breweries Association of India (BAI) has written to Bihar Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary, urging the state government to lift prohibition on alcohol in a phased and controlled manner.

The letter requested the state to consider withdrawing the liquor ban in phases, starting with the introduction of products with low alcohol content, such as beer and wine, which have an alcohol content below 15 per cent.

In 2016, the state introduced the Bihar Prohibition and Excise Act, 2016, which banned the manufacture, sale and consumption of all alcoholic beverages.

To discourage harmful alcohol consumption, the association asked the state to link taxes to alcohol content through the Alcohol-in-Beverage (AIB) taxation model.

"While most governments tax beverages with higher alcohol content more heavily, the Karnataka government has rolled out an AIB-based taxation framework that sets the amount of tax on the basis of the amount of alcohol in the beverage, regardless of the type of beverage," the letter said.

BAI PROPOSES A CESS TO SET UP AT LEAST ONE DE-ADDICTION CENTRE IN EVERY DISTRICT OF THE STATE

The association also suggested mandating 75 per cent women employees on factory floors to promote their economic independence.

It proposed levying a de-addiction cess on alcohol to establish at least one de-addiction centre in each of Bihar's 38 districts. Furthermore, it recommended levying a women welfare cess on alcohol sold in Bihar, which would convert excise revenue into a direct and permanent investment in women's welfare across the state. To make its case, the BAI said illegal liquor continues to flow into Bihar. In 2025, 3,775,321 litres of liquor were seized in the state.

In the first two months of 2026, the average monthly seizure reached 370,684 litres, an 18 per cent increase over the 2025 monthly average.

It also said that prohibition has caused Bihar to voluntarily surrender one of the largest sources of own tax revenue available to a state government. "Additionally, the state has lost an additional ₹10,000 crore of indirect tax revenue in the last decade from ancillary industries and the hospitality and logistics sectors," the letter said.

WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING

440 protected animals, 15 kg ivory seized

MONIKA YADAV
New Delhi, 13 July

The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has seized more than 440 endangered and protected wild animals, around 15 kg of ivory and elephant ivory articles, and arrested 33 people in a nationwide crackdown on wildlife trafficking, the finance ministry said on Monday.

The intelligence-led operations, carried out across several states over the past week, targeted organised wildlife crime syndicates involved in the illegal trade in protected species and wildlife products.

Among the biggest seizures was an operation near Sujangarh in Rajasthan on July 10, where DRI officers recovered around 11 kg of elephant ivory and apprehended four persons. The accused were handed over to the Forest Department for action under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

In another operation in Mysuru, officials seized around 4 kg of elephant ivory and apprehended three persons involved in the illegal trade.

The ministry said commercial trade in ivory is prohibited under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, in line with India's obligations under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

The import and export of ivory are also prohibited under the Foreign Trade Policy.

In a separate operation, DRI officers in Howrah apprehended two persons and seized two ivory idols suspected to have been smuggled into India from Bangladesh.

1. Binturong, 2. Ivory tusks, 3. Shikra, 4. Star tortoise, 5. Wolley monkey

The DRI also busted an interstate wildlife trafficking syndicate operating across Maharashtra and West Bengal in a joint operation with the Central Bureau of Investigation's (CBI's) Economic Offences Branch, supported by the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB).

The operation resulted in the rescue of 15 slow lorises, two binturongs, 28 star tortoises, six Egyptian vultures and two shikra birds. Six accused were arrested by the CBI.

Separately, DRI officers foiled several attempts to smuggle protected wildlife into India through international airports by passengers arriving from Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur and Colombo.

The seizures included albino red-eared turtles, bearded dragons, African spurred tortoises, Borneo pythons, green iguanas, mangrove monitor lizards, Goeldi's marmosets, yellow-cheeked gibbons and siamang gibbons, among other protected species.

According to the ministry, coordinated operations in Bengaluru, Warangal, Pune, Surat, Chennai, Kolkata, Tiruchirappalli, Madurai, Srikakulam, Hojai in Assam, Rajasthan, Mysuru and Howrah also led to the seizure of wildlife products such as pangolin scales, leopard pelts, seahorse-based products and red sanders, besides the rescue of several protected reptiles, birds and mammals.

The operations were carried out in coordination with agencies including the CBI, WCCB, Customs Airport Intelligence Units, state forest departments and local police.

The finance ministry said the sustained intelligence-led operations underscore DRI's efforts to dismantle organised wildlife trafficking networks and reinforce India's commitment to protecting endangered species under CITES.

Historic win: Indian women trounce England at Lord's

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
London, 13 July

A stellar all-round performance fuelled India's famous 270-run win over England in the first-ever Women's Test staged at the iconic Lord's here on Monday.

Needing four wickets to wrap up the game overnight, India completed formalities in the morning session on day four, dismissing England for 186 in 62.5 overs despite a dogged half-century from Sophie Ecclestone.

It was a clinical performance from India in a format they don't play often, beating an out of sorts England fair and square in the "Home of Cricket". Resuming their second innings at 130 for six, England batted for more than 90 minutes before succumbing to Indian bowlers.

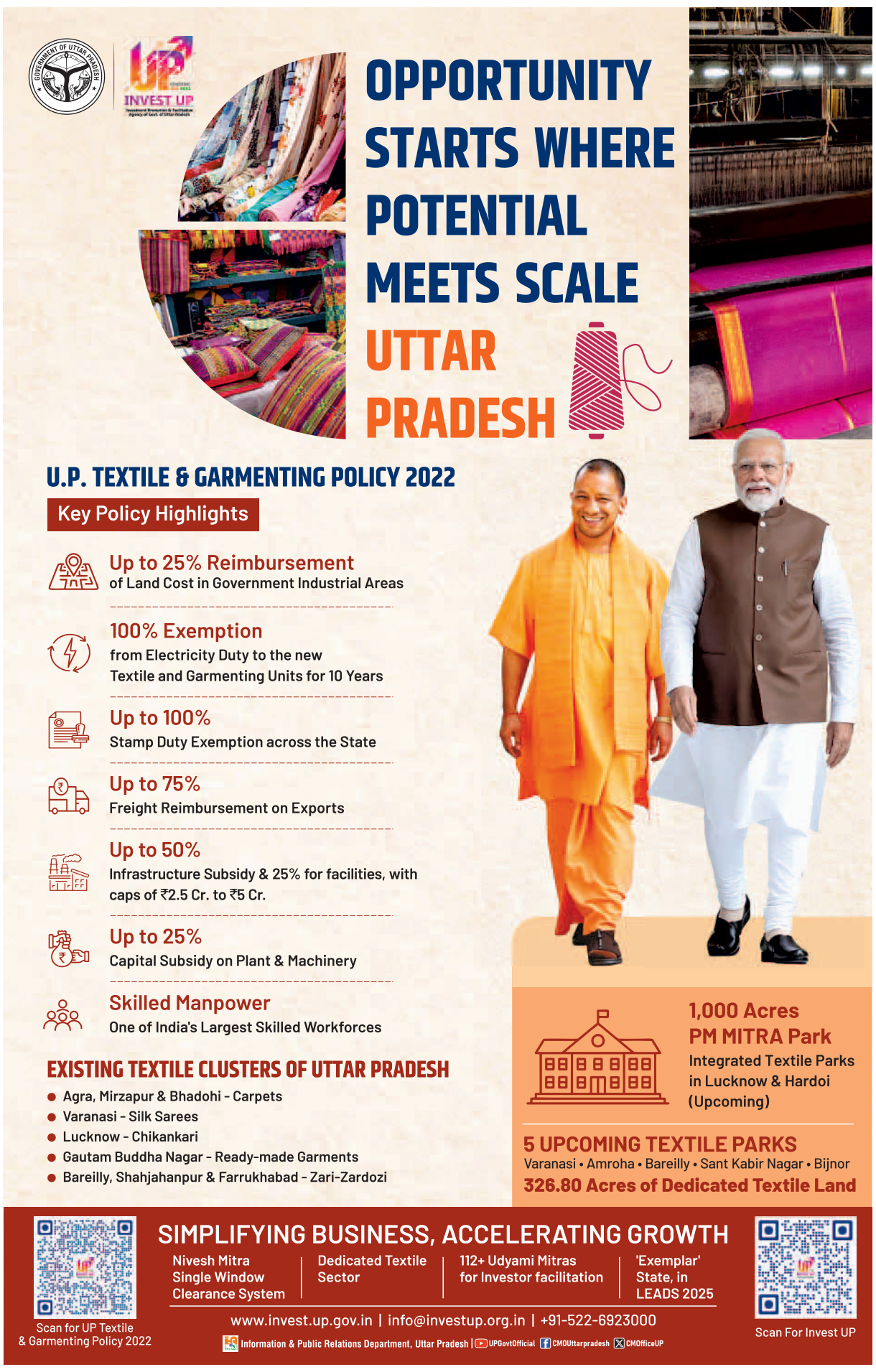
India had set a mammoth 457-run target for the hosts.

With the massive win, India also maintained their superior record against England in the longest format.

In the 16 Tests both teams have played, India have won four games, England one while the remaining 11 matches were drawn.

India's only defeat to England came way back in 1995.

Indian players celebrate after winning the one-off Test match at the Lord's in London on Monday PHOTO: PTI



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CRAR → 25.43%

1. Audited Profit & Loss Account for the year ended 31st March, 2026 (Rs. in Crore)

Sl. No.	Particulars	2025-26	2024-25
A	Income	2,736.06	1,960.42
B	Interest & Other Operating Expenses	2,319.96	1,591.44
C	Operating Profit = (A-B)	416.10	368.98
D	Provisions & Contingencies	156.06	144.84
E	Profit After Tax (PAT) = (C-D)	260.04	224.14

2. Audited Balance Sheet as on 31st March, 2026 (Rs. in Crore)

A	Sources	31.03.2026	31.03.2025
1	Owned Fund	1,518.84	1,215.95
2	Deposits	15,892.27	15,551.69
3	Borrowings	24,007.08	14,115.16
4	Other Liabilities & Provisions	1,554.90	1,411.59
	TOTAL	42,973.09	32,294.39
B	**Applications**	**31.03.2026**	**31.03.2025**
1	Cash & Bank Balances with RBI & Other Banks	16,101.56	12,475.90
2	Investments	13,842.21	7,288.07
3	Loans & Advances	11,804.69	11,659.92
4	Other Assets	1,224.63	870.50
	TOTAL	42,973.09	32,294.39

OPERATING PROFIT (Rs. in Crore): 369 (2025) → 416 (2026)
NET PROFIT (Rs. in Crore): 224 (2025) → 260 (2026)
ASSET SIZE (Rs. in Crore): 32294 (2025) → 42973 (2026)
NET WORTH (Rs. in Crore): 1157 (2025) → 1438 (2026)
NET NPA (%): 0.80 (2025) → 0.78 (2026)

Sd/-
M/s. Mitra Roy & Datta
Chartered Accountants

Sd/-
Special Officer