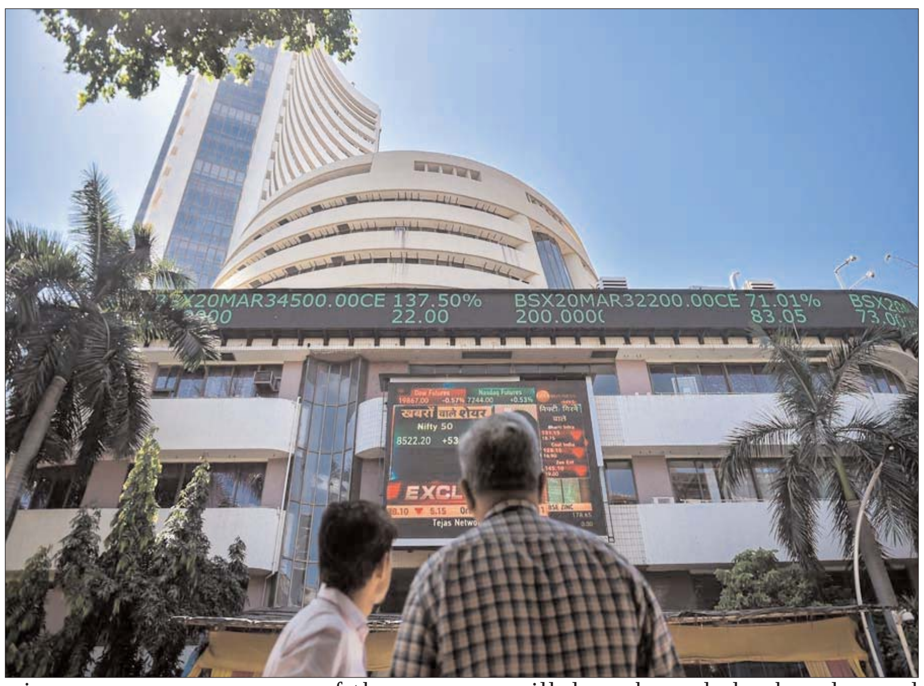
Stock markets extend rally to third day; Bajaj Finance surges over 8 per cent



MUMBAI, JULY 31: Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty closed with gains for the third consecutive day on Friday, tracking a sharp rally in Bajaj Finance and foreign fund inflows.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 166.49 points, or 0.21 per cent, to settle at a more than three-week high of 78,094.64 with 16 of its constituents ending higher and 14 settling with losses. During the day, the index jumped 344.1 points, or 0.44 per cent, to 78,272.25.

The 50-share NSE Nifty rose by 66.45 points, or 0.27 per cent, to end at a three-week high of 24,383.60.

From the Sensex pack, Bajaj Finance jumped 8.11 per cent after the firm on Thursday reported a 28 per cent year-on-year rise in consolidated profit after tax (PAT) to Rs 6,081 crore for the June quarter of FY27, driven by growth in core income and improvement in asset quality.

Bajaj Finserv, Mahindra & Mahindra, Adani Ports, Tata Steel, Reliance Industries, Bharat Electronics and Titan were also among the winners.

Tata Consultancy Services, Eternal, Infosys, ITC and InterGlobe Aviation were among the major laggards.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 3,623.51 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data.

"Positive momentum continued, although some profit booking emerged at higher levels as caution persisted amid elevated yields and potential rate-hike concerns. The sustainability of the recovery will depend largely on the ongoing earnings season, which is currently outperforming forecasts, and on a reduction in global risks," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

The domestic IT index witnessed profit booking following its recent rally, he added.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, climbed 0.45 per cent to USD 89.43 per barrel.

In Asian markets, South Korea's KOSPI rebounded sharply and jumped 17.91 per cent. Japan's Nikkei 225 index, Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index also ended in positive territory.

Markets in Europe were trading in the green. US markets ended significantly higher on Thursday.

On Thursday, the Sensex ended 273.55 points, or 0.35 per cent, higher at 77,928.15. The Nifty went up by 66.95 points, or 0.28 per cent, to end at 24,317.15.

HDFC Bank's CSR footprint touches 10.77 crore lives across nation

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS JAMMU, JULY 31

HDFC Bank has stated that it has impacted over 10.77 crore lives through its CSR initiatives. Parivartan, the umbrella for these programmes, now spans all 28 States and 8 Union Territories of India. The Bank works in partnership with NGO partners, local administrations and community institutions to ensure that interventions remain locally relevant, scalable and capable of delivering sustainable long-term impact.

The Bank reported a spend of Rs.1,316.18 crore on its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives in Financial Year 2025-26, as disclosed in its Integrated Annual Report for the year. This marks an increase of over Rs.248 crore over the previous fiscal, taking the Bank's cumulative CSR investment under its umbrella programme, Parivartan, to approximately Rs.7,492 crore since inception.

The Bank's flagship Holistic Rural Development Programme (HRDP) has expanded its reach to more than 11,000 villages across the country, up from over 10,430 villages a year earlier. Through an integrated approach spanning water stewardship, agriculture, livelihoods, education, healthcare, sanitation and community infrastructure, the programme continues to improve quality of life while strengthening rural ecosystems.

During the year, the Bank also deepened its work in remote and hard-to-reach geographies, extending its coverage to 498 border villages — up from 298 villages in the previous year — in keeping with the national priorities under the Border Area Development Programme and the Vibrant Villages Programme of the Government of India. Interventions in these areas span rural electrification, livelihood enhancement and improvement of basic infrastructure in agriculture, education and health.

Mr. Kaizad Bharucha, Deputy Managing Director, HDFC Bank, said, "Our CSR Initiatives through Parivartan continue to be guided by our belief that lasting change is built village by village, family by family, in close partnership with the communities we serve. This year, our efforts to deepen the Holistic Rural Development Programme and extend our reach into border villages reflect our commitment to ensuring that no community is left behind. As we look ahead, we remain focused on building on this journey with the same philosophy that has guided us from the start --- that development must be inclusive, locally relevant and future focused."

The Bank's initiatives under Parivartan continue to be organised across six core focus areas that include Rural Development: The Bank's flagship CSR initiative — the Holistic Rural Development Programme (HRDP) — follows an integrated, cluster-based approach driving improvements across rural infrastructure, education, natural resource management, health and sanitation. HRDP now covers over 11,000 villages, with the Bank's outreach to border villages growing to 498; Promotion of Education: This focus area strengthens quality education through scholarships, school infrastructure and digital learning initiatives. HDFC Bank had disbursed 36300+ scholarships, set up 3460+ SMART schools and built 930 community libraries; Skill Training & Livelihood Enhancement: The Bank equips youth, women and individuals with vocational training and entrepreneurship support to help them secure sustainable livelihoods, reaching over 9.6 lakh individuals till date; Healthcare & Hygiene: This focus area expands access to preventive care, maternal and child health, and hygiene awareness through mobile clinics and community health initiatives, over 3 lakh individuals had benefited from these initiatives; Financial Literacy & Inclusion: Under this focus area, the Bank empowers individuals with financial awareness, promotes savings, and provides access to banking and insurance services, including through its flagship 'Vigil Aunty' digital fraud awareness campaign, which had reached 75 lakh + followers across platforms; and Natural Resource Management: This focus area promotes sustainable practices in water conservation, afforestation, solar solutions and biodiversity conservation. HDFC Bank has created 16,091 water conservation structures and installed over 80,527 solar lights, till date.

Aligned with 10 of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, these six focus areas reflect HDFC Bank's integrated approach to inclusive and sustainable development, a press release issued by the bank said.

Bloomberg delays decision on adding Indian government bonds to global index

NEW DELHI, JULY 31: Bloomberg Index Services Limited (BISL) has deferred a decision on including Indian government bonds in the Bloomberg Global Aggregate Index, saying recent market reforms need more time to become firmly established before a final decision is taken.

In an official update on its ongoing review, BISL said the Indian government bond market has made "meaningful progress" towards meeting the standards required for inclusion, but added that market participants want to see the recent changes become part of regular market practice.

"BISL believes the Indian government bond market continues to make meaningful progress toward meeting the global standards expected for inclusion," the update said.

The index provider noted that since publishing the results of its consultation earlier this year, it has continued discussions with investors, regulators, custodians and other stakeholders, who have broadly recognised the progress made in improving accessibility to India's government bond market.

According to the update, electronic trading capabilities for Indian government bonds have continued to expand, with automated trading platforms now supporting execution across several major investor regions. It also highlighted India's recent decision to remove withholding tax and capital gains tax for eligible foreign investors in government bonds, calling it "a significant enhancement to the market's post-trade framework by reducing operational complexity and improving settlement efficiency."

However, BISL said feedback from market participants suggests that these reforms should become more firmly established before any decision on index inclusion is taken. "Many market participants would like to see these enhancements become more firmly established in day-to-day market practice before a decision is made on index inclusion," it said.

The update added that while automated trading capabilities continue to expand, respondents said implementation has not yet been completed across all major investor regions. Investors also want to see further evidence that recent market reforms translate into more efficient operational workflows, including improvements to account opening and onboarding processes for foreign investors.

BISL said the Bloomberg Global Aggregate Index is a flagship benchmark for global investment-grade fixed income markets and underpins a wide range of investment products worldwide. "As the Bloomberg Global Aggregate Index serves as a flagship benchmark... BISL believes it is appropriate that any inclusion decision be supported not only by regulatory and market structure reforms, but also by demonstrated operational efficiency across the diverse range of investors that track and benchmark against the index," the update said.

BISL said it believes "additional time is warranted" for the recent market enhancements to be fully reflected in day-to-day market practice before making a decision on India's inclusion. It added that it will continue engaging with market participants and provide a further update as the review progresses.

FADA Launches Public Awareness Campaign for Ethenol Blended E 20 Fuel

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS JAMMU, JULY 31

Mr Sanjay Aggarwal, Chairperson of Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA), Jammu & Kashmir, welcomes the significant improvement in ethanol-blended petrol across the region. This development marks another important milestone in India's journey towards cleaner mobility, enhanced energy security, and reduced dependence on imported fossil fuels.

Mr Sanjay Aggarwal the Chairperson of FADA Jammu & Kashmir stated:

"The improved availability of ethanol-blended fuel is a positive step for the automobile ecosystem and consumers alike. It reflects the Government of India's sustained commitment towards promoting sustainable fuels while strengthening the country's energy independence. We appreciate the efforts of the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Oil Marketing Companies, and all stakeholders who have contributed to expanding ethanol-blended fuel availability in Jammu & Kashmir."

The automobile industry has consistently supported the adoption of cleaner and greener mobility solutions. Modern passenger vehicles manufactured in India are designed to operate efficiently on the prescribed ethanol-blended fuels, and increased accessibility will further enhance consumer confidence while contributing to lower carbon emissions.

Mr Sanjay Aggarwal said that the wider availability of ethanol-blended fuel will:

Support the Government's clean energy and environmental objectives.

Reduce dependence on imported crude oil, thereby strengthening India's energy security. Benefit consumers through uninterrupted access to environmentally friendly fuel options.

Encourage the continued adoption of advanced fuel-compatible vehicles.

FADA Jammu & Kashmir also reiterates the importance of sustained public awareness regarding the benefits and compatibility of ethanol-blended fuels. The association remains committed to working closely with automobile manufacturers, oil marketing companies, and government agencies to facilitate a smooth transition towards cleaner and more sustainable mobility solutions.

With the increasing availability of E20 (20% ethanol-blended) petrol, many customers have questions regarding its compatibility, performance, and impact on their vehicles. Common concerns include whether E20 fuel can be used in their existing vehicle, whether it may affect engine life, reduce fuel efficiency, impact vehicle performance, or void the manufacturer's warranty. Such concerns are understandable during the transition to a new fuel standard.

However, customers should rely on the recommendations provided by their vehicle manufacturer. Modern petrol vehicles designed or certified for E20 are engineered and thoroughly tested to operate safely and efficiently with ethanol-blended fuel. Any change in fuel economy is generally modest and depends on factors such as vehicle design, driving habits, and maintenance.

FADA Jammu & Kashmir encourages vehicle owners to consult their owner's manual or contact an authorized dealership for accurate guidance, rather than relying on misinformation or unverified claims.

By understanding the facts about E20, consumers can make informed decisions and confidently contribute to India's vision of cleaner mobility, enhanced energy security, and a more sustainable future.

The Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA), Jammu & Kashmir Chapter, has launched a public awareness initiative encouraging vehicle owners to adopt ethanol-blended fuel as a step towards cleaner mobility, environmental sustainability, and a self-reliant India.

The Association also appealed to automobile dealers across Jammu & Kashmir to actively educate customers about ethanol-blended fuel during vehicle delivery and service interactions. By spreading accurate information and addressing customer queries, dealerships can play an important role in increasing public confidence and accelerating the adoption of cleaner fuels.

Sony unveils next-generation BRAVIA 9II & BRAVIA 7II with True RGB Technology

JAMMU, JULY 31: Sony's latest innovation in premium home entertainment, the BRAVIA 9II and BRAVIA 7II televisions powered by revolutionary True RGB Technology, was unveiled today at Shivanghi Electronics, Marble Market, Jammu. The launch was led by Mr. Shashank Aggarwal, Managing Director, Shivanghi Electronics, in the presence of Mr Sunny Magotra ASM J&K, Sony India, along with customers, technology enthusiasts and well-wishers.

The newly introduced BRAVIA series is powered by Sony's advanced RGB Backlight Master Drive Pro, delivering exceptional colour accuracy, enhanced brightness, deeper blacks and a truly immersive cinematic experience. Equipped with the powerful AI Cognitive Processor XR, Acoustic Multi-Audio+ technology, Google TV and future-ready Gemini integration, the BRAVIA 9II and BRAVIA 7II redefine premium television viewing for Indian consumers. Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Shashank Aggarwal said, "We are delighted to introduce Sony's most advanced BRAVIA televisions to customers in Jammu. These cutting-edge models reflect Sony's commitment to innovation, and we are proud to bring this next-generation viewing experience to our patrons."

With a relationship spanning more than three decades with Sony, Shivanghi Electronics has earned the confidence of customers by consistently delivering authentic Sony products backed by reliable service and customer support. The Sony-exclusive showroom offers an engaging retail environment where visitors can experience Sony's latest innovations across televisions, cameras, audio products, PlayStation gaming, headphones, accessories and other premium consumer electronics under one roof.

The launch reaffirmed Sony's commitment to bringing world-class technology closer to consumers while further strengthening Shivanghi Electronics' position as Jammu's preferred destination for premium Sony products.

Meet Orgaheal: An Organic Nutraceutical Brand Focused on Clean Everyday Nutrition

RAJASTHAN, JULY 31: As Indian consumers become increasingly mindful of what they eat and the ingredients they consume every day, conversations around nutrition are gradually shifting beyond labels and marketing claims towards transparency, quality, and informed decision-making. Growing awareness around preventive wellness, clean-label products, and certified organic ingredients has encouraged many consumers to evaluate not only what they consume, but also how those products are sourced, formulated, and tested before becoming part of their daily routine.

This shift reflects a broader transformation taking place across India's health and wellness ecosystem. Consumers today have greater access to information, enabling them to research ingredients, compare certifications, understand product labels, and make choices based on quality and credibility. As a result, nutrition brands are increasingly expected to provide greater clarity around their sourcing practices, formulation processes, and quality standards.

The changing consumer mindset is also influencing India's organic food and wellness sectors. While convenience and availability remain important, ingredient integrity, responsible sourcing, and transparent communication are becoming increasingly significant in purchasing decisions.

A key reason certified organic nutrition continues to resonate with many consumers is the assurance it offers around two growing concerns: ingredient integrity and cultivation practices. As public awareness around pesticide residues in food and genetically modified ingredients continues to increase, recognised organic certification has become an important reference point for consumers seeking greater confidence in the products they choose. Rather than relying solely on marketing claims, many consumers are increasingly looking for recognised standards that provide greater transparency around how ingredients are grown and verified. Against this backdrop of changing consumer expectations, the nutraceutical industry is evolving beyond product claims towards greater emphasis on ingredient integrity, quality assurance, and responsible manufacturing.

Trust today is increasingly shaped by the ability of brands to communicate clearly about their sourcing practices, formulation philosophy, certification standards, and quality.

It is within this changing landscape that Orgaheal has positioned itself as an organic nutraceutical brand focused on certified organic supplements and clean everyday nutrition.