WORLD CUP 2026

THE CUP OF GLORY

The FIFA World Cup trophy is arguably the most recognisable prize in world sport. Yet behind its glittering appearance lies a remarkable history filled with mystery, theft, art, and tradition. Here are some fascinating factoids that make excellent conversation starters

It isn't the Original

The current FIFA World Cup Trophy has been in use only since 1974. The original trophy, known as the Jules Rimet Trophy, was awarded from 1930 to 1970. Brazil earned permanent ownership after becoming the first nation to win the World Cup three times in 1970

The Design Represents the Triumph of Humanity

Italian sculptor Silvio Gazzaniga designed the current trophy. Rather than depicting a footballer, it shows two human figures lifting the Earth, symbolising the universal joy of victory and football's global reach

It's Gold, It's Hollow

Many people assume the trophy is solid through and through. In reality, it is 18-carat solid gold, but hollow inside; if it were completely solid, it would weigh around 70-80 kg, making it impossible to lift. The trophy stands 36.8 cm (14.5 inches) tall and weighs 6.175 kg (13.6 lb)

There is Only Room for So Many Champions

The names of every winning nation since 1974 are engraved on the underside of the trophy. FIFA estimates there is enough space for champions through 2038, after which a decision will have to be made about whether to redesign or replace it

It's More than Gold

The gold alone is worth only a fraction of its value. Experts estimate the trophy's total value at more than $20 million, largely because of its historical and symbolic significance rather than the precious metal itself

No Country Gets to Keep the Original Trophy

Unlike the Jules Rimet Trophy, the current FIFA World Cup Trophy never leaves FIFA permanently. Champions receive the original only during the victory ceremony and later receive a gold-plated replica, while the original returns to FIFA's custody in Zurich

The Trophy Travels in Luxury

For major ceremonies, the World Cup Trophy is transported in a specially crafted Louis Vuitton trunk, continuing a partnership that began with the 2010 World Cup

Up to 35% Incentives

▸▸ From Page 1

The company's interest has been rekindled by ISM 2.0.

It's "very keen to use the incentives to set up a base in India, most likely for packaging, before they look at anything more elaborate," the person said.

Seoul, being a maker of LEDs, could get 35% incentives for an LED wafer fabrication plant, around 35% for advanced packaging, or 25% for conventional packaging, under ISM 2.0. The definition will be cleared when mission rules are released.

Seoul Semiconductor didn't respond to queries.

"Almost 99% of the LCD market is in China currently," said a government official. "Prices have reduced so much that it is not profitable any more to put up a fab. But India sees potential in the micro and nano LED market and wants to make space for itself there."

Analysts said the India opportunity is compelling for companies like Seoul Semiconductor as it's emerging as one of the world's largest automotive markets, with rapid premiumisation in both electric vehicle and internal combustion engine models. Smart cities, massive commercial real estate buildouts, and agricultural sectors are other avenues that can be tapped.

LED or light-emitting diode technology goes into components used in cars, smartphones, TVs and home lighting. Optoelectronic devices interact with, produce or detect light in all its forms.

Seoul Semiconductor sees "India as a potential diversification strategy," said Neil Shah, vice president of research at Counterpoint Research.

"They might likely start with an ATMP (assembly, test, marking and packaging) and module line similar to China or Vietnam because building a leading edge front-end MOCVD (metal-organic chemical vapour deposition) wafer fab will warrant extremely high capex, intellectual property transfer and infrastructure stabilisation," he said.

With ISM 2.0, Indian enterprises are looking to expand the India fab and ATMP ecosystem to areas such as compound semiconductors and optoelectronics.

"A company like Seoul Semiconductor, which is one of the top five global player in optoelectronic semiconductor space, fits the bill perfectly," he said. "It has already been enjoying a diversified footprint with its leading edge fab in South Korea to back-end packaging in China and Vietnam to be closer to where their clients and prospects are."

As ecosystem infrastructure matures–with stable electricity and pure industrial water–the facility could expand to include a compound semiconductor fab, focusing on epitaxial growth and front-end wafer fab for gallium nitride and/or potentially silicon carbide discrete devices, Shah said.

Epitaxy is used in semiconductor fabrication to create a perfect crystalline foundation layer on which to build a semiconductor device.

South Korean president Lee Jae Myung and Prime Minister Narendra Modi had met in April, pledging to strengthen bilateral cooperation in strategic sectors. It marked the first South Korean presidential visit in eight years and was seen as both countries making a concerted effort to de-risk supply chains, scale advanced manufacturing, and build technological resilience beyond the traditional US-China axis. Semiconductors emerged as a key area of focus with Modi encouraging South Korean companies to take advantage of India's semiconductor incentives.

"If Seoul Semiconductor announces plans to establish a manufacturing facility in India, it would represent a milestone investment, the first major Korean semiconductor manufacturing project since both the summit and the launch of the India Semiconductor Mission," said Kyunghoon Kim, head of the India and South Asia team at the Korea Institute for International Economic Policy.

South Korean semiconductor firms are primarily focused on research and development activities in India currently as its semiconductor strategy is focused on legacy nodes.

"Korean chipmakers specialise in cutting-edge semiconductor technologies," Kyunghoon said. "As a result, their interest in establishing fabs in India remains limited for now. That said, opportunities are emerging across the broader semiconductor ecosystem."

Deloitte Sees 6.8% GDP Growth in FY27

New Delhi: Deloitte India on Sunday projected India's economy to grow at 6.5-6.8% in the current fiscal, with growth expected to strengthen in the second half of the year supported by festive demand, monetary easing, and a gradual stabilisation in global conditions. In its latest edition of Economic Outlook report, Deloitte said India entered 2026 in a Goldilocks phase, with macroeconomic fundamentals appearing unusually well balanced, but geopolitical developments altered the global landscape with tensions in the Middle East disrupting critical shipping routes, triggering volatility in commodity prices and weakening investor sentiment. — **PTI**

Operating Margin Contracts

▸▸ From Page 1

For the total sample, operating margin contracted to 20.9% in the June quarter from 26.9% in the year-ago quarter. Excluding lenders, the sample's operating margin fell to 14.7% from 17.3% by a similar comparison. The proportion of raw material cost in sales for the truncated sample shot up to 33.3% from 29.8% a year ago, reflecting input price inflation due to geopolitical conflict.

Some banks and finance companies reported strong numbers, boosting overall net profit growth. Excluding lenders, the sample's net profit growth shrank to just 1.2%. The share of banks and finance companies in the total sample's net profit rose to 56.9% in the June quarter from 51.3% a year ago.

The total sample's profit growth was muted by Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) numbers. Net profit at the country's largest company by revenue and market cap fell 22.4% year-on-year to Rs20,946 crore. Excluding RIL, the sample's net profit surged to 24.1%. The lower profit was attributable to an exceptional gain of Rs 8,924 crore recorded in the year-ago quarter on the sale of RIL's stake in Asian Paints.

At the beginning of the results season, analysts had anticipated double-digit growth in the aggregate net profit of the Nifty 50 companies, aided by banks and finance companies. "The overall earnings growth is anticipated to be healthy, anchored by financials, metals, and capital goods companies," Motilal Oswal Financial Services said in a preview report.

Clarity on the financial trend will emerge as more companies from across sectors declare quarterly numbers in the coming weeks.