JOBLESSNESS EASES ACROSS MOST CATEGORIES

Unemployment rate falls to six-month low of 5% in Aug

● Urban female unemployment rises to 8.9%

SHUBHAM RANA
New Delhi, September 15

INDIA'S UNEMPLOYMENT RATE for people aged 15 years and above fell to a six-month low of 5% in August, according to the latest Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) released by the National Statistics Office (NSO) on Tuesday.

The joblessness rate was 5.1% both in July and August 2025.

The decline in the unemployment rate was mainly driven by rural India, while it rose in urban areas—a trend that has continued for the last three months.

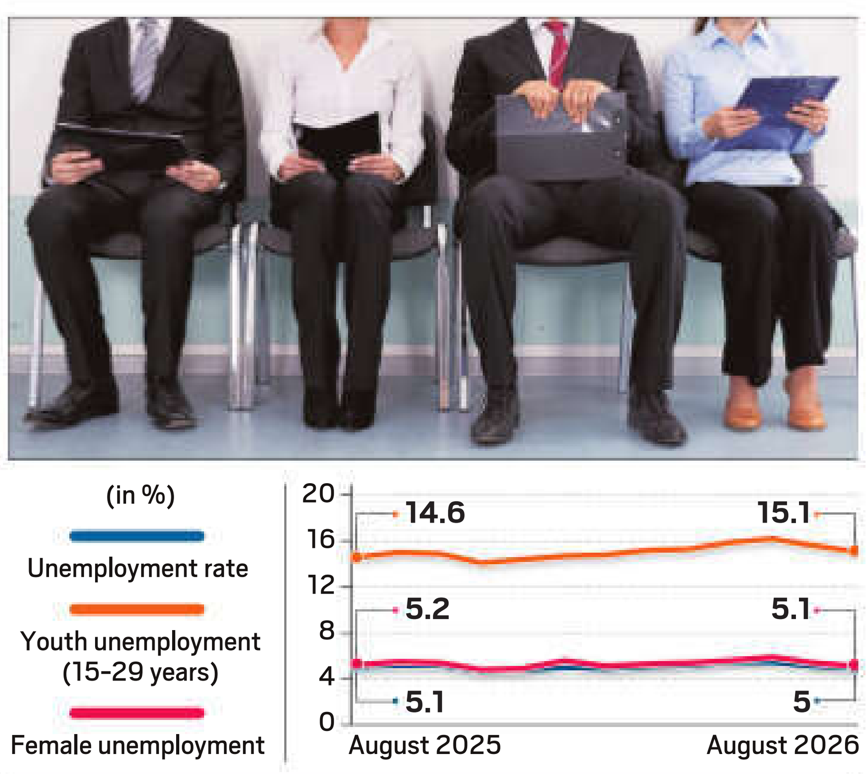
The unemployment rate in rural areas fell to an eight-month low of 4.1% in August from 4.5% in July.

In urban areas, unemployment rose to a five-month high of 6.8% in August from 6.7% in July.

Urban and rural unemployment was 6.7% and 4.3%, respectively, in August 2025.

The latest monthly figures show lower unemployment in the second quarter of FY27, after the joblessness rate rose to 5.4% in the April-June quarter from 5% in January-March.

JOB TREND



The national unemployment rate was higher among women at 5.1%, though it fell from 5.4% in July. The male unemployment rate eased to 4.9% from 5.0% in July.

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The survey showed a decline in unemployment among rural workers across genders in August, while the rate rose for urban men and women.

Rural male unemployment declined to 4.3% in August from 4.6% in July and 4.5% a year ago. Urban male unemployment jumped to 6.1% in August from 5.9% both a month ago and August 2025.

Urban female unemployment rose slightly to 8.9% last month from 8.8% in July, while the rate fell in rural areas to 3.9% from 4.3% in July.

Youth unemployment—for those aged between 15 and 29 years—eased to 15.1% in August from 15.6% in July. The unemployment rate was higher among young women at 18.5%, while for young men it was 13.9%.

Joblessness among youth in urban areas was starkly higher than in rural areas. Urban youth unemployment rate rose to 18.7% in August from 18.6% in July, while for rural youth it fell to 13.3% from 14.1% in July.

The August PLFS bulletin also pointed to a rise in labour force participation.

The Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR)-the percentage of persons working or seeking or available for work-for people aged 15 years and above increased to a six-month high of 55.6% in August from 55.4% in July.

The worker population ratio–the percentage of employed persons in the population–for those aged 15 years and above was 52.8% in August, up from 52.5% in July.

The monthly estimates are based on responses from 3,70,160 people surveyed across the country.

Edible oil imports rise on stocking

REUTERS
Mumbai, September 15

INDIA'S SOYABEAN OIL imports surged to a record in August, while palm oil purchases climbed to a six-month high, as refiners stocked up ahead of the country's festival season, a leading industry body said on Tuesday.

Higher palm oil and soyoil buying by the world's biggest importer of vegetable oils could help top producers Indonesia, Malaysia and Argentina move their stocks, supporting benchmark palm oil and soyoil futures.

India's palm oil imports in August rose 7% from the previous month to 782,761 metric tons, the highest since February, the Solvent Extractors' Association of India (SEA) said in a statement.

Imports of soyabean oil rose 26% to a record high of 628,736 tonne and sunflower oil imports decreased 36% to 160,639 tonne, the industry body said.

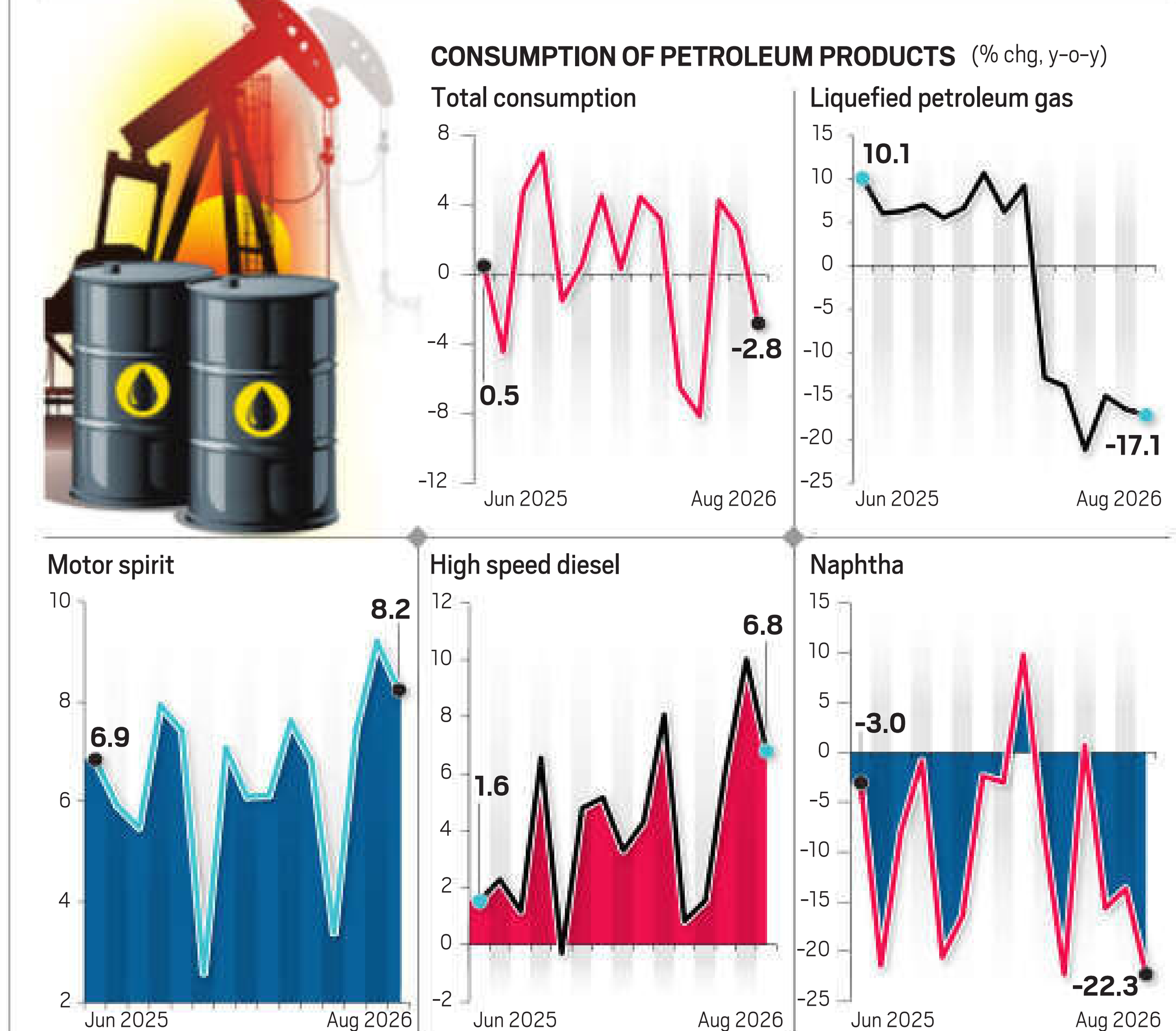
Overall edible oil imports rose 1.5% to an 11-month high of 1.57 million tonne, driven by higher shipments of palm oil and soyoil. Refiners increased purchases to build stocks ahead of the upcoming festival season, said a Mumbai-based dealer with a global trade house.

Soybean oil is available at competitive prices compared with palm oil, which should keep September shipments elevated at above 600,000 tonne.

WAR FALLOUT: NAPHTHA, LPG CONSUMPTION TAKES A HIT

CONSUMPTION OF NAPHTHA, a key feedstock for the petrochemical value chain comprising polymers- -to-plastics, synthetic textiles and other materials and rubber has contracted each month since December 2024, barring February this year . The rise in global crude prices, caused by supply disruptions from the war in West Asia, has led to lower capacity utilisation at naphtha crackers. The fall may partly stem from increased use of gas as petrochemical feedstock. Consumption of liquefied petroleum gas, which accounts for 13% of total petroleum products consumption, also contracted for six consecutive months through August due to price hikes following supply disruptions. However, consumption of transportation fuels remained resilient. **Compiled by Saikat Neogi**

CONSUMPTION OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS (% chg, y-o-y)



Source: CMIE

Government moves to clear EU carbon verifier hurdle

MUKESH JAGOTA
New Delhi, September 15

INDIA HAS STEPPED up efforts to address a key implementation challenge for exporters facing the European Union's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)—the limited availability and recognition of accredited verifiers who can certify embedded carbon emissions in exported goods.

The government has constituted a Committee on Export Preparedness for EU CBAM under the chairmanship of Additional Secretary (Trade Negotiations Bilateral) in the Department of Commerce, bringing together key ministries and departments, regulators and industry bodies to coordinate India's preparedness and address compliance-related issues.

A major focus of the government's efforts is to develop domestic verification capacity.

The National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies (NABCB) has held consultations with prospective validation and verification bodies (VVBs), with two accredited VVBs having submitted applications for EU and UK CBAM-related accreditation. Their office assessments are currently under way.

The shortage of recognized verifiers is a significant concern for Indian exporters because CBAM compliance requires reliable measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) of embedded emissions.

Without an adequate pool of accredited verifiers, exporters could face higher compliance costs and difficulties in obtaining the documentation required under the EU regime.

The government is also seeking recognition of NABCB by the EU as an accreditation body for CBAM verifiers.

The Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has written to the EU Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security seeking recognition. Separate discussions are being held with the European Commission's Directorate-General for Taxation and Customs Union (DG TAXUD) on verifier accreditation and other aspects of CBAM implementation.

India is also discussing a memorandum of understanding with an EU-recognised accreditation body, which officials expect could help support NABCB's recognition in the future.

Another challenge concerns the availability of reliable emissions data, particularly for steel exports.

The government has taken up the issue with the Ministry of Steel and sought a mechanism for upstream producers to account for and provide data on embedded emissions.

Gold imports fall in August

INDIA'S GOLD IMPORTS contracted in August following a sharp increase in customs duty on the precious metal, according to the data released by the commerce ministry. Gold imports dipped by 57.75% to $2.3 billion in August. **PTI**