



June 14, 2022 – Tuesday

Economy

Retail inflation eases to 7.04 pc in May on softening food, fuel prices

Retail inflation eased to 7.04 per cent in May, mainly on account of softening food and fuel prices as the government as well as the RBI stepped in to control spiralling price rise by way of duty cuts and repo rate hike. However, the inflation print stayed above the Reserve Bank's upper tolerance level of 6 per cent for the fifth month in a row. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) based retail inflation was 7.79 per cent in April. In the year-ago month of May 2021, retail inflation stood at 6.3 per cent. Inflation in the food basket in May 2022 was at 7.97 per cent, down from 8.31 per cent in the previous month, as per data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) on Monday. As per the data, the inflation print in 'cereals and products' segment eased to 5.33 per cent in May as against 5.96 per cent in the preceding month, while that for 'oil and fats' softened to 13.26 per cent from 17.28 per cent. The rate of price rise for fruits slowed to 2.33 per cent from 4.99 per cent. However, vegetable prices accelerated 18.26 per cent as against 15.41 per cent in April.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/economy/retail-inflation-eases-to-7-04-pc-in-may/2559125/>

Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Mela to be hosted in 200 locations

With an aim to connect the youth with more opportunities for on-ground training within corporates and further a chance to get employment, the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship will be organising the Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Mela every month now on. On June 13, 2022, the mela will be organised from 9 AM to 5 PM. The PM National Apprenticeship Mela will take place across 200+ locations in India, the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship informed in a statement. More than 1000 companies from across 36+ sectors will be participating in the Mela providing opportunities of being hired as an apprentice within companies. Individuals having a 5th-12th-grade pass certificate, a skill training certificate, an ITI Diploma, or a graduate degree can apply for an interview across these trades/opportunities. The candidates will be given a choice of 500+ trades, including welders, electricians, housekeepers, beauticians, mechanics, and others.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/pradhan-mantri-national-apprenticeship-mela-to-be-hosted-in-200-locations-122061300322_1.html

Phase-2 of fortified rice distribution starts; 90 high burden districts covered in April-May

The Centre has kick-started the phase-II distribution of fortified rice to high-burden districts via ration shops from April 1 and so far 90 districts have been covered out of 291 targeted, Food Secretary Sudhanshu Pandey said on Monday. The government's aim is to distribute fortified rice in a phased manner through all central government schemes by 2024, as announced by the Prime Minister in his address on the 75th Independence Day to address the issue of malnutrition among the poor. The first phase was started in October 2021 under which fortified rice was supplied through Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman-PM POSHAN (erstwhile Mid-Day Meal Scheme).

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/phase-2-of-fortified-rice-distribution-starts-90-high-burden-districts-covered-in-april-may/articleshow/92181645.cms>

July-September hiring outlook at 8-year high

Job creation is likely to see a strong boost in the upcoming September quarter, with employers reporting the most optimistic hiring outlook in eight years, as companies look to speed up the post-pandemic recovery process and sustain growth, despite rising inflation. According to the ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey, shared exclusively with ET, about 63% of 3,080 employers said they will hire more in the coming quarter, while 12% see decrease in hiring intent and 24% expect to keep workforce levels steady. Only 1% were unsure about hiring intentions. This puts net employment outlook - the difference between companies looking to hire and those expecting a fall in headcount or hiring numbers - at 51%. When compared with the same period last year, hiring sentiment has improved by 46 percentage points. There is a 13-pp growth from the preceding quarter. Hiring markets in India are ranked first in the region and third globally. India's on-year increase is ranked first globally, outperforming the 40-country average increase since the third quarter of 2021 by 28 points.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/jobs/july-september-hiring-outlook-at-8-year-high/articleshow/92191507.cms>

India to be fastest-growing wealth market over next decade: Henley study

There will be a big boom in the number of millionaires and billionaires in India over the next decade, according to the forecast high-net-worth-individual (HNWI) growth figures published in the latest Henley Global Citizens Report, which tracks private wealth and investment migration trends worldwide. The number of dollar millionaires and billionaires will grow by 80 per cent over the next 10 years in India compared to just 20 per cent in the US and 10 per cent in France, Germany, Italy, and the UK, said the Q2 report released by international residence and citizenship by investment advisory firm Henley & Partners. However, the latest projected 2022 net inflows and outflows of US dollar millionaires (the difference between the number of HNWIs who relocate and the number who emigrate from a country) forecast by New World Wealth and featured on the Henley Private Wealth Migration Dashboard show a net loss for India this year of about 8,000.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-to-be-fastest-growing-wealth-market-in-producing-high-net-worth-individuals-over-next-decade-henley-forecast-122061300513_1.html

Banking and Finance

RBI's regulations need periodic review to align them with evolving industry practices: RRA

RBI's Regulations Review Authority has suggested all regulations of the central bank should underline the rationale and be reviewed periodically to align them with evolving industry practices and financial landscape. Regulations Review Authority (RRA 2.0) was set-up by the Reserve Bank of India in April last year with the objective of reducing the compliance burden on Regulated Entities (REs) by streamlining the regulatory instructions and rationalising reporting requirements. "The recommendations of the RRA would be internalised by the Reserve Bank to achieve the intended outcomes. The RRA exercise should, going forward, result in clarity, simplification, accessibility and rationalisation in regulatory instructions and returns," the central bank said in a statement. The RRA 2.0, in its report, also recommended that any ad hoc return introduced for capturing specific data should be prescribed with a sunset clause of not more than six months duration.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/banking-finance/rbis-regulations-need-periodic-review-to-align-them-with-evolving-industry-practices-rra/2559148/>

NACH auto debit transactions: Bounce rates at near three-year low in May 2022

In a marked improvement in collection efficiency, NACH auto debit bounce rates in May 2022 declined to 29 per cent, a near three-year low. According to data from the National Payments Corporation of India, a little over 10.18 crore auto debit transactions amounting to Rs 94,751 crore were conducted on the NACH platform in May this year. Of this, 2.94 crore transactions worth Rs 20,811.6 crore were rejected. This translates to a bounce rate of 28.97 per cent in volume terms and about 22 per cent in value terms.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/money-and-banking/nach-auto-debit-transactions-bounce-rates-at-near-three-year-low-in-may-2022/article65522725.ece>

Asset quality in NBFCs, HFCs improves in Q4FY22 on lower slippages: Icra

Non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and housing finance firms witnessed an improvement in their asset quality in the fourth quarter of FY22, helped by minimal impact of Omicron variant of COVID-19 and lower slippages from

restructured book, a report said on Monday. The gross stage 3 assets (loans overdue for more than 90 days) for NBFCs reduced to 4.4 per cent in March 2022 from 5.7 per cent in December 2021, Icra Ratings said in a report. HFCs' (Housing Finance Companies) gross stage 3 assets moderated and stood at 3.3 per cent vis--vis 3.6 per cent in December 2021, the report said. "NBFCs and HFCs registered an improvement in their asset quality in Q4 FY22 as the impact of the Omicron variant of Covid-19 was minimal and the slippage from the restructured book was lower," it said. The agency said that entities augmented their collections in view of the tighter Income Recognition, Asset Classification and Provision (IRAC) norms, which are applicable from October 2022. NBFC write-offs remained elevated and marginally higher than the last fiscal, while HFC write-offs were modest.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/asset-quality-in-nbfc-hfcs-improves-in-q4fy22-on-lower-slippages-icra-122061300833_1.html

Govt's net tax revenue seen to exceed budget estimate by Rs 1.3 trillion

Aided by better compliance, higher commodity prices and revival of economic activities, the Centre's net tax revenue in the current financial year may be around Rs 20.62 trillion, Rs 1.28 trillion or 6.6% more than the budget estimate (BE) of Rs 19.34 trillion, according to the analysts. Buoyancy in the gross tax revenue (GTR) could also yield an additional Rs 1.1 trillion in additional central tax devolution to states in FY23 over BE of Rs 8.17 trillion, much-needed succor to them as the 5-year GST shortfall compensation mechanism will end on June 30. The GTR may be around Rs 29.87 trillion in FY23, Rs 2.29 trillion or 8.3% more than the BE as the goods and service taxes (GST) and direct taxes are expected to substantially overshoot their respective Bes. The GTR performance will be coming on a high base of FY22, which saw a very high tax buoyancy of 1.74. In the last financial year, the Centre's gross tax receipts were Rs 27.08 trillion, Rs 4.91 trillion higher than the BE.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/economy/govts-net-tax-revenue-seen-to-exceed-budget-estimate-by-rs-1-3-trillion/2558124/>

Anti-profiteering Authority to be merged with Competition Commission

National Anti-profiteering Authority (NAA) is all set to be subsumed into the Competition Commission of India (CCI), according to a report in *Livemint*. NAA is the anti-profiteering watchdog of GST. Its term ends in November, and no extension has been planned, per the report. NAA came into existence in 2017 and has received two extensions since then. Officials who spoke to *Livemint* said that NAA's investigation arm will continue to function in some form under CCI. The official said that the move will reduce the multiplicity of regulators as CCI can handle cases independently. The implementation of anti-profiteering provisions in GST law has faced several challenges. According to the *Livemint* report, the plan is to transfer cases to CCI after NAA's term ends. NAA's role is to make sure that the benefit of tax rate reduction reaches the consumer immediately. This has been the role of NAA primarily because the GST council has been rejigging the rates in the last five years. NAA has little to do when rates go up. Authorities are still receiving several complaints about the early years of GST, saying that the benefit of the input tax credit has not been fully passed on to consumers.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/national-anti-profiteering-authority-to-be-merged-with-competition-commission-122061300136_1.html

Sebi clarifies on applicability of alternative investment funds, portfolio managers rules

Investment managers of an AIF (alternative investment fund) can provide investment management services to the offshore fund only by getting registered as portfolio managers, according to markets regulator Sebi. Providing an informal guidance in this regard to Ace Lansdowne Investments Services LLP, which manages Sebi-registered AIF — Ace Lansdowne India Investment Fund— Sebi indicated that its views might be different for different conditions. It had sought clarity whether the applicant, which is already acting as the investment manager of an AIF, can provide investment management services to the offshore fund and whether the applicant is required to obtain registration as a portfolio manager.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/market/sebi-clarifies-on-applicability-of-alternative-investment-funds-portfolio-managers-rules/2559101/>

Industry

Domestic steel prices fall ₹12,000-15,000 per tonne; steepest in 6 months

Domestic steel prices have taken a tumble by ₹12,000-15,000 per tonne, specially for June deliveries, down 14–20 per cent month-on-month. This is amongst the steepest fall that domestic steel prices have witnessed over the last five to six months. Poor demand, stock pile-up and a drop in iron-ore prices, apart from the overhang of another round of Covid-led disruptions in China and ongoing hit in exports are seen as sentiment dampeners. According to trade sources, hot-rolled coil (HRC) prices for June deliveries stood at ₹64,000 per tonne, down 18 per cent m-o-m (₹78,000 per tonne). Rebar prices (landed) was down to ₹61,000-63,000 per tonne – a 15 per cent fall from their May prices of ₹74,000 per tonne. Wire rods saw a similar 15 per cent m-o-m fall in June to around ₹63,000 per tonne. <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/markets/commodities/domestic-steel-prices-fall-12000-per-tonne-steepest-in-6-months/article65523999.ece>

Cotton price hike will significantly decrease margins, put pressure on working capital for small-sized spinners

Increased cotton prices will put a stress on the working capital and liquidity of small-sized cotton yarn spinners in the first half of fiscal 2023, which may lead to lower capacity utilisations. However, an operational recovery is expected by the second half of this fiscal, on the back of a likely correction in cotton prices with the arrival of the new cotton season in October 2022 wherein cotton production could be higher than in the current season, says a recent report. However, India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) says players with strong liquidity and deleverage balance sheets are likely to remain comfortable. Ind-Ra says cotton prices started moving upwards post-pandemic, not only domestically but also globally on account of the US ban on the use of Xinjiang region cotton followed by a low crop yield in India.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/small-biz/sme-sector/cotton-price-hike-will-significantly-decrease-margins-put-pressure-on-working-capital-for-small-sized-spinners/articleshow/92172570.cms>

Jute industry seeks govt support for revival, growth

The Indian Jute Mills Association has sought government support for revival and steady growth of the ailing industry, through measures such as bank credit, affordable housing and funds for new technology. The industry body, in a recent representation, had urged the Jute Commissioner to support the sector on which more than 2.5 lakh mill workers and 40 lakh farmers are directly dependent. "The jute sector seeks government support to tap advantages under schemes like affordable rental housing complexes (ARHC), creation of a bank credit facilitation scheme for modernisation, and funds for research and development," IJMA Director General Debasish Roy told PTI.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/garments/-textiles/jute-industry-seeks-govt-support-for-revival-growth/articleshow/92181667.cms>

'Top 10 textile companies posted much higher growth in FY22 than pre-Covid levels'

The Indian textile industry has recorded significant growth in sales and EBITDA in FY22 over pre-Covid levels, according to the latest Wazir Textile Index, which is based on a detailed financial analysis of the top ten textile companies, compiled by Wazir Advisors, a management consulting firm. In FY22, overall sales have seen an 18 per cent y-o-y growth since FY20. The overall EBITDA in FY22 improved significantly by 85 per cent when compared with the one reported in FY20. Raw material costs and manpower costs have seen a rise of 36 per cent and 19 per cent when compared to FY20 levels.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/top-10-textile-companies-posted-much-higher-growth-in-fy22-than-pre-covid-levels/article65523657.ece>

Consumer Affairs Ministry asks food delivery players to furnish plans on improving complaints redressal

The Department of Consumer Affairs on Monday directed online food delivery platforms such as Zomato and Swiggy to submit plans on improving consumer redressal mechanism within 15 days besides furnishing details about their existing grievance redressal frameworks. This direction was given during a meeting chaired by DoCA Secretary Rohit Kumar Singh with key e-commerce food business operators regarding consumer complaints received on the National Consumer Helpline. The meeting was attended by e-commerce FBOs including Swiggy and Zomato besides National Restaurant Association of India (NRAI).

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/companies/consumer-affairs-ministry-asks-food-delivery-players-to-furnish-plans-on-improving-complaints-redressal/article65523879.ece>

May sees 190 M&A deals, deal volumes grew by more than 50%: Grant Thornton

India Inc inked 190 merger and acquisition (M&A) deals aggregating to \$19.1 billion in May 2022, according to Grant Thornton Bharat Dealtracker Report May 2022. While overall deal volumes grew by more than 50 per cent, values jumped more than double recording the second highest monthly values in the last four years. The month saw acquisition in the infrastructure and materials space - Adani Group acquisition of Holcim's Indian assets (Ambuja Cement and ACC Ltd) for \$10.5 billion. The month also witnessed Larsen & Toubro Infotech and MindTree Ltd merger, the report noted.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/may-sees-190-ma-deals-deal-volumes-grew-by-more-than-50-grant-thornton/article65523461.ece>

Govt's IT spends to grow 12 pc to \$9.5 billion in 2022: Report

The government's spending on information and technology will grow 12.1 per cent to \$9.5 billion in 2022, an analyst firm estimated on Monday. The growth estimate is less than a 15 per cent jump in the government's IT (Information and Technology) spending in 2021, and higher than the 5 per cent growth estimated at the global level for 2022, a report by research firm Gartner said. Its principal analyst Apeksha Kaushik said contrary to the global trends, all segments will experience growth in India in 2022. The firm estimated software vertical to witness the highest growth at 27.9 per cent in 2022 to \$2.195 billion, while the IT services vertical to grow 13.4 per cent to \$2.40 billion.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/finance/govts-it-spends-to-grow-12-pc-to-9-5-billion-in-2022-report/articleshow/92181694.cms>

Agriculture

Curb on fishing subsidy to affect millions of Indian fishers: Report

The government subsidy provided to Indian fishermen helps the community do fishing activities to support their livelihood and prohibiting such measures by a WTO agreement will ultimately affect millions of fishers and their families leading to poverty, sources said. Developed members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) are pushing to eliminate subsidies under the proposed fisheries subsidies agreement, which is under negotiation here. The government subsidy provided to Indian fishermen helps the community do fishing activities to support their livelihood and prohibiting such measures by a WTO agreement will ultimately affect millions of fishers and their families leading to poverty, sources said. Developed members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) are pushing to eliminate subsidies under the proposed fisheries subsidies agreement, which is under negotiation here. According to CMFRI (Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute) Census 2016, the total marine fisherfolk population is 3.77 million comprising 0.90 million families. Nearly 67.3 per cent of the fishermen families were under BPL category. Stoppage of subsidy assistance to fishers in India will ultimately affect millions of fishers and their families and will lead to poverty, one of the sources said.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/curb-on-fishing-subsidy-to-affect-millions-of-indian-fishers-report-122061300308_1.html

Energy

Financial health of discoms hurdle for renewable energy sector: Moody's

The weak financial health of state-owned distribution companies (discoms) will remain a challenge for India's renewable energy sector, where investments worth \$225-250 billion are estimated to reach a generation capacity of 500 GW by 2030, according to Moody's. The payment delays to these companies are common, leading to a build-up of receivables from off-takers and an increase in working capital debt for renewable energy companies. The rating agency in a statement said that the weak financials of state-owned distribution companies have led to delays in the signing of Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs). This in turn occasionally results in project delays or cancellations. While renewable energy enjoys preferential dispatch in India, payments for electricity sold to state-owned discoms are usually delayed beyond the 60-day period as specified in the PPAs. There is no history of distribution companies not making payments to distribution companies according to PPA tariff (if undisputed), Moody's said.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/weak-discoms-remain-a-hurdle-for-india-s-renewable-energy-sector-moody-s-122061300360_1.html

Gujarat removes \$110/t ceiling on imported coal price in PPAs

The Gujarat government has removed the Harga Batubara Acuan index ceiling of free on board (FOB) price of coal of \$110 per tonne for the supplemental power purchase agreement between Gujarat Urja Vikas Nigam (GUVNL) and Adani Power Mundra (APMuL). The Supplementary PPAs were inked on December 5, 2018 and March 30, 2022. Removing the ceiling on imported coal will aid both the parties in avoiding disputes on energy payments and will ensure that pass-through of coal cost is done in a prudent and transparent manner. It will also aid imported coal based plants in import fuel, whose prices have been rising in the international markets due to high demand.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/gujarat-removes-110t-ceiling-on-imported-coal-price-in-ppas/article65524076.ece>

Telecom

DoT estimates 86% reduction in spectrum usage charges after 5G auctions

Estimates made by the Department of Telecommunications reveal that spectrum usage charges (SUC) will reduce by 86 per cent after the upcoming 5G auctions. According to the DoT's calculations, if each operator wins 40MHz of spectrum in the mid-band (3300MHz) and 400MHz in the mm-wave band (26GHz), there will be an 86 per cent decrease in SUC.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/info-tech/dot-estimates-86-reduction-in-spectrum-usage-charges-after-5g-auctions/article65522699.ece>

States

Chennai Corporation seeks World Bank assistance on drinking water project

The Greater Chennai Corporation has sought a World Bank funding of Rs 376 crore for the drinking water project in the city. Sources in the Corporation told IANS that the project will be executed jointly by the Water Resources Department (WRD), Metro water, Chennai Corporation, and the Transport Department. This project falls under the umbrella of Chennai city partnership programme. Chennai City Corporation will be the nodal agency for the project. The Detailed Project Report (DPR) of the scheme will soon be submitted to World Bank, sources in the Greater Chennai Corporation told IANS. The DPR is prepared in consultation with Metro Water and the Chennai Corporation. The project once implemented will lead to providing continuous water supply to the residents of the Corporation. The Department will also widen and renovate a few water tanks in the suburban areas of the city to get sufficient water supply throughout the year.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/chennai-corporation-seeks-world-bank-assistance-on-drinking-water-project-122061300416_1.html

Karnataka launches software for farmer schemes to expedite delivery of sops

To ensure that the farmers get easy access to benefits distributed under various government schemes, the Karnataka government has launched software for Aadhar-based, single-window registration for the schemes. The state departments of agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry, revenue, food, civil supplies and fisheries departments of the state government are covered under the initiative. The Farmer Registration & Unified Beneficiary Information System or FRUITS software, facilitates single registration using an Aadhar card and Karnataka's Bhoomi digitised land record system for authenticating ownership. Through the creation of single digital identification through FRUITS, farmers can access benefits of hosts of schemes such as Direct Benefit Transfer under PM Kisan, payment for Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for crops, special financial assistance, caste certificate authentication and ration cards.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/economy/karnataka-launches-software-for-farmer-schemes-to-expedite-delivery-of-sops/2558131/>

Healthcare

Drugmakers seem to be in no hurry to launch Covid antiviral pill Paxlovid

While Covid cases rise across India, Pfizer's antiviral pill Paxlovid is not available in the country as drug companies are in no hurry to seek emergency use authorisation, and the only one with approval from the Drugs Controller

General of India is yet to launch it. India is seeing a steady rise in Covid cases, with 48,000 active cases as on June 13, and a test positivity rate of 3.24%. Paxlovid developed by Pfizer was found to be effective on people with higher risk of severe disease after contracting Covid-19. Multiple drug companies based in India have got sub-licenses from Medicines Patent Pool, a UN-backed public health organisation to manufacture and distribute the generic versions of oral antiviral Covid-19 medication in 95 low and middle income countries (LMIC) including India.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/pharmaceuticals/drugmakers-seem-to-be-in-no-hurry-to-launch-covid-antiviral-pill-paxlovid/articleshow/92190063.cms>

External

For India, response to pandemic would not be complete without TRIPS waiver: Piyush Goyal

The package of measures, which the WTO is negotiating here as part of the response to COVID-19 pandemic, must include the patent waiver proposal of India and South Africa as it would help in dealing with this disease, commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal said on Monday. "For India, a response to the pandemic would not be complete without a TRIPS (Trade Related aspects of Intellectual Property Rights) waiver," Goyal said here. He was speaking at the thematic session in response to pandemic and TRIPS waiver at MC 12 (ministerial conference of the World Trade Organisation).

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/for-india-response-to-pandemic-would-not-be-complete-without-trips-waiver-piyush-goyal/articleshow/92186452.cms>

India's coal imports may drop 11% to 186 MT in FY23: Coal ministry

India's coal import is likely to decline by 11.4 per cent to 186 million tonnes (MT) in the current financial year, even as the state-owned firm has issued import tenders to source the dry fuel from overseas. Coal India Ltd, which accounts for over 80 per cent of domestic coal output, last week issued tenders to import coal in a bid to build up the stock of fossil fuel at the indigenous power plants, as mandated by the government. The country imported 210 MT of coal in the 2021-22. According to the medium-term projections of the ministry of coal, of the 186 MT of coal that the company is expected to import in the ongoing fiscal, 130 MT is non-coking coal and 56 MT is coking coal. India is likely to import 172 MT of coal in 2024-25, 173 MT in 2027-28, and 170 MT in 2029-30. The country imported 215 MT of coal in FY'21 and 249 MT of coal in FY'20, the coal ministry said.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/markets/india-s-coal-imports-may-drop-11-to-186-mt-in-fy23-coal-ministry-122061300653_1.html

India's merchandise exports likely to be at USD 117.2 bn in Q1 FY23: Exim Bank

The country's total merchandise exports are likely to be at USD 117.2 billion in the first quarter of FY23, according to India Exim Bank. The total merchandise exports stood at USD 95.5 billion in the corresponding quarter of the previous year, the bank said on Monday. Non-oil exports continue to witness a double-digit growth of 12.6 per cent, amounting to USD 93 billion, during the first quarter (April-June) of 2022-23, compared to USD 82.6 billion in the year-ago period. The rise in the country's exports could be attributed largely to the continued increase in global commodity prices, driven by supply shocks, enhanced price competitiveness owing to exchange rate movements, and benefits from possible trade diversion, as per the bank.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/indias-merchandise-exports-likely-to-be-at-usd-117-2-bn-in-q1-fy23-exim-bank/articleshow/92186299.cms>

Russia becomes India's second biggest oil exporter in May, say trade sources

Russia rose to become India's second biggest supplier of oil in May, pushing Saudi Arabia into third place but still behind Iraq which remains No. 1, data from trade sources showed. In May Indian refiners received about 819,000 barrels per day (bpd) Russian oil, the highest thus far in any month, compared to about 277,00 in April, the data showed. Western sanctions against Russia for its invasion of Ukraine prompted many oil importers to shun trade with Moscow, pushing spot prices for Russian crude to record discounts against other grades. That provided Indian refiners, which rarely used to buy Russian oil due to high freight costs, an opportunity to snap up low-priced crude. Russian grades accounted for about 16.5% of India's overall oil imports in May, and helped raise the share of oil from the C.I.S. countries to about 20.5%, while that from the Middle East declined to about 59.5%, the data showed. The share of African oil in India's crude imports last month surged to 11.5% from 5.9% in April, the data showed.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/market/commodities/russia-becomes-indias-second-biggest-oil-exporter-in-may-say-trade-sources/2559146/>

Israel, India prepare to resume free trade agreement talks

Israel and India are preparing to resume talks on a free trade agreement, Israel's Economy Ministry said on Monday, adding that an Indian delegation had arrived in Jerusalem to discuss framework rules and coordinate expectations for negotiations. Last October, India and Israel agreed to resume free trade talks with an aim of signing a deal by mid-2022. Israel's Economy Ministry said a senior team from India's Industry and Trade would meet with their Israeli counterparts to discuss the ground rules but did not say when actual trade negotiations would resume.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/israel-india-prepare-to-resume-free-trade-agreement-talks/articleshow/92181920.cms>

Indian silk exports rebound from 6-year lows in FY22 on improving demand

India's exports of silk products rebounded from six year lows in 2021-22 on improving demand for silk carpets and ready made garments from markets such as Europe and the United States. Shipments grew 36 per cent in rupee value terms in 2021-22 to ₹1,925.94 crore, while in dollar terms, the growth was 35 per cent at \$258.81 million over previous year. During 2020-21, the silk product exports had touched a six-year low of ₹1,412.13 crore.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/indian-silk-exports-rebound-from-6-year-lows-in-fy22-on-improving-demand/article65523639.ece>