



January 19, 2024 – Friday

## Economy

### **Inflation needs to align with target by 2nd quarter: RBI monthly bulletin**

India should sustain the strong growth momentum in the next financial year by securing at least a 7 per cent expansion in GDP while the headline inflation needs to align with the target of 4 per cent by the second quarter of FY25, as projected, said the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) state of the economy report issued on Thursday. The report said the "potential output is picking up with actual output running above it, although the gap is moderate," indicating there is no overheating in the economy.

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/inflation-needs-to-align-with-target-by-second-quarter-says-rbi-report-124011800997\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/inflation-needs-to-align-with-target-by-second-quarter-says-rbi-report-124011800997_1.html)

### **GDP growth will moderate to below 6% in December quarter: ICRA projection**

Rating agency ICRA has projected the GDP growth rate to slow down to below 6 per cent in the December quarter, mainly account of sharp fall in kharif crop output, and weak progress in rabi sowing for some crops. India had registered a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate of 7.6 per cent in the July to September period. The rating agency said the year-on-year growth in ICRA Business Activity Monitor eased for the second consecutive month to a six-month low of 8.1 per cent in December 2023 -- as against 7.9 per cent in December 2022 and 9.6 per cent in November 2023.

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/gdp-growth-will-moderate-to-below-6-in-december-quarter-icra-projection-124011800700\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/gdp-growth-will-moderate-to-below-6-in-december-quarter-icra-projection-124011800700_1.html)

## Banking and Finance

### **Budget 2024: Modest tax revenue target likely for FY25**

The Centre is likely to budget a modest 9-11% increase in net tax revenue receipts in FY25 over the budget estimate for the current year in the February 1 interim budget. In absolute terms, the net tax revenue of the Centre is expected to be pegged at ₹25-26 lakh crore. In the current fiscal, the Centre has budgeted ₹23.3 lakh crore net tax revenue. The revised estimate for net tax revenue receipt in the current fiscal year, after devolution to states, will be at about the same level as the budget estimate, considering the likely shortfall in excise duty collections, people aware of the details told ET.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/finance/modest-tax-revenue-target-likely-for-fy25/articleshow/106971003.cms>

## Industry

### **Bharat brand of products: Franchise route for govt retail stores on the cards**

The government is planning to use the franchise route to sell the Bharat brand of products to consumers directly, said a senior official. It will also employ mass media to create awareness about the initiative through which it offers subsidised kitchen essentials such as onion, pulses and atta directly to consumers. "We are looking at opening 50

stores across Delhi," the official said. The government is looking for someone to manage and operate the everyday operations of these stores, he added.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/retail/bharat-brand-of-products-franchise-route-for-govt-retail-stores-on-the-cards/articleshow/106967769.cms>

### **Govt may extend scope of PLI scheme to job-creating sectors: Deloitte**

To incentivise the manufacturing sector and generate employment, the government may extend the scope of PLI scheme to include sectors like garments, jewellery and handicrafts in the forthcoming interim Budget, Deloitte said. Currently, Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme is available for 14 sectors. Deloitte India Partner Rajat Wahi said driving rural income is one of ways to deal with inflation and slack in consumption demand. "Today we have 14 sectors under PLI scheme, but a lot of these sectors do not generate massive employment. Leather, garment, handicraft, jewellery — many of these sectors need PLI scheme to come in because they are the ones which are the highest employment generators. That will help lower income households as well as urban," Wahi told PTI.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/business/industry-govt-may-extend-scope-of-pli-scheme-to-job-creating-sectors-deloitte-3367865/>

### **Phone Sales: Strong festive demand saved phone sales in 2023, say market trackers**

Robust demand in the festive season helped arrest a steep decline in smartphone shipments, with the market remaining almost flat in 2023, according to market trackers. According to research firm Canalys, mobile shipments fell 2% to 148.6 million units in 2023, though it marked a recovery from the sharp 6% decline in 2022. The market showed resilience, thanks to improved consumer confidence in the latter part of the year despite brands facing inventory challenges, inflationary worries and demand fluctuations during the year, Canalys added.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/electronics/strong-festive-demand-saved-phone-sales-in-2023-market-trackers/articleshow/106967455.cms>

## **Agriculture**

### **India estimated to have harvested 355.35 MT horticulture crops in 2022-23**

The country is estimated to have harvested 355.35 million tonnes of horticulture crops in the 2022-23 crop year, about 8.07 million tonnes more than the previous year, as per agriculture ministry data released on Thursday. The ministry has come out with the third production estimate after the harvesting of the 2022-23 horticulture crops. Agriculture Minister Arjun Munda said despite challenges surrounding climate change, horticulture production has gone up, thanks to efforts of farmers and agri-scientists.

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/india-estimated-to-have-harvested-355-35-mt-horticulture-crops-in-2022-23-124011800546\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/india-estimated-to-have-harvested-355-35-mt-horticulture-crops-in-2022-23-124011800546_1.html)

### **UP govt raises sugarcane prices by Rs 20 per quintal**

The Uttar Pradesh government increased sugarcane prices by ₹20 per quintal on Thursday, a move that will benefit the influential voter bloc of sugarcane farmers in the state ahead of the general elections. While the 2023-24 crushing season started in October, the government has determined the state advisory price (SAP) only now, increasing the price of early maturing variety of sugarcane to 370 per quintal from 350, with the price of common varieties being increased to 360 per quintal and that of unsuitable varieties to 355 per quintal.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/agriculture/up-govt-raises-sugarcane-prices-by-rs-20-per-quintal/articleshow/106967008.cms>

## **Infrastructure**

### **NHAI involved in 150 arbitration cases**

The NHAI is involved in about 150 arbitration cases, with claims amounting to ₹1,09,000 crore in build-operate-transfer (toll and annuity) projects. Of these, 95 arbitral awards have been published, with claims amounting to ₹41,100 crore, while another 62 are ongoing cases amounting to claims of ₹83,800 crore

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/infrastructure/nhai-involved-in-150-arbitration-cases/articleshow/106967699.cms>

### **Over 600 km of cycle tracks developed, 76,000 CCTV cameras installed in 100 smart cities: Centre**

More than 600 kilometres of cycle tracks have been developed in 100 smart cities while over 76,000 CCTV surveillance cameras installed so far, the Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry said on Thursday. Under the Smart Cities Mission, 6,855 "smart classrooms" and 40 digital libraries have been developed. Also, over 50 lakh solar and LED streetlights have been installed and over 89,000 km of underground electricity cabling constructed, it said. The ministry said special purpose vehicles in these 100 cities are developing around 8,000 multi-sectoral projects worth more than Rs 1.7 lakh crore while 6,650 projects worth Rs 1.32 lakh crore have been completed till January 15 this year.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/infrastructure/over-600-km-of-cycle-tracks-developed-76000-cctv-cameras-installed-in-100-smart-cities-centre/articleshow/106963737.cms>

## **Energy**

### **12 Gw pumped storage hydropower projects get govt's green signal**

The Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has given the environment-related go-ahead to pumped storage hydropower projects with a capacity of 11.98 gigawatts (Gw). This marks the largest tranche of these new-tech energy storage projects to be approved in one go in the country. The clearance has been granted for eight projects, with an investment of Rs 81,981 crore, spread across five states, according to the notifications posted on the Parivesh portal of MoEFCC.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/centre-approves-nearly-12-gw-pumped-storage-hydropower-projects-124011800894\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/centre-approves-nearly-12-gw-pumped-storage-hydropower-projects-124011800894_1.html)

## **States**

### **UP raises state price for sugarcane by Rs 20 per quintal for 2023-24 season**

With national elections round the corner, the Uttar Pradesh (UP) government has raised the state advised price (SAP) of all sugarcane varieties by Rs 20 per quintal for the 2023-24 (October 2023-September 2024) season to Rs 370 for early-sown varieties. However, farmers in western UP, who have been demanding a hike in SAP, don't seem to be too impressed, terming the hike as "inadequate."

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/agriculture/up-raises-state-price-for-sugarcane-by-rs-20-per-quintal-for-2023-24-season-124011800283\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/agriculture/up-raises-state-price-for-sugarcane-by-rs-20-per-quintal-for-2023-24-season-124011800283_1.html)

### **Maharashtra inked MoUs worth Rs 3.53 lakh crore at WEF in Davos: CM Eknath Shinde**

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde has said that the state has inked memorandums of undertaking (MoUs) worth Rs 3,53,675 crore at the World Economic Forum 2024 in Davos, Switzerland. Shinde thanked investors, noting the increased confidence of global industries that showed interest in investing Rs 1 lakh crore in Maharashtra. These MoUs have the potential to create more than 2 lakh jobs in the state, said a statement from the CM's office late on Wednesday night. Highlighting the focus on tangible implementation, Shinde emphasised the acceleration of growth compared to last year. He said the state's image has been spotlighted as people-oriented with a strong emphasis on industrialisation, skilled manpower, and quick decision-making, the statement said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/finance/maharashtra-inked-mous-worth-rs-3-53-lakh-crore-at-wef-in-davos-cm-eknath-shinde/articleshow/106945677.cms>

## **External**

### **Commerce ministry to launch portal to provide info for aspiring exporters**

The commerce ministry will launch an online platform in the next 2-3 months to provide all relevant information, including details about custom duties, for aspiring exporters. Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) Santosh Kumar Sarangi said the portal will act as a one-stop place for getting all information on engaging in export activities. The 'Trade Connect ePlatform' will provide facilitation for new and aspiring exporters, information on various regulations to access markets, sectors, export trends, and easy access of benefits under Free Trade Agreements.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/commerce-ministry-to-launch-portal-to-provide-info-for-aspiring-exporters/articleshow/106959245.cms>

#### **India to push for public stockholding of food grains at WTO MC13**

India, in the 13th ministerial conference (MC13) of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in February, will push for fast-tracking its demand for a solution on public stockholding for food grains, over negotiations on other agriculture-related issues. “The public stockpiling of food grain is the longest-pending issue. Promise was made by the members in the Bali ministerial conference (in 2013) and then later endorsed by subsequent conferences... without that, we will not take part in any discussion on any other issue on agriculture,” a senior government official said on Thursday.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/agriculture/at-wto-mc13-india-to-prioritise-demand-food-stockholding-solution-124011800884\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/agriculture/at-wto-mc13-india-to-prioritise-demand-food-stockholding-solution-124011800884_1.html)

#### **Flows into NRI deposits double to \$7.3 bn in April-November 2023**

The flow of money into Non-Resident Indians' (NRIs') deposits doubled to \$7.3 billion in April-November 2023 from \$3.63 billion in the same period a year ago. Inflows into Foreign Currency Non-Resident (FCNR) accounts increased to \$2.5 billion in April-November 2023 as against an outflow of \$199 billion in the same period of 2022, according to Reserve Bank of India (RBI) data. The outstanding NRI deposits rose by \$1 billion to \$144.48 billion at the end of November 2023, up from \$143.48 billion in October 2023. They showed a marked increase from \$134.5 billion a year ago.

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/flows-into-nri-deposits-double-to-7-3-bn-in-april-november-2023-124011800904\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/flows-into-nri-deposits-double-to-7-3-bn-in-april-november-2023-124011800904_1.html)

#### **Davos 2024: Global alliance calls for inclusive access to advanced AI tech**

World Economic Forum's AI Governance Alliance on Thursday said a global effort is needed to create equitable access to advanced artificial intelligence. Artificial intelligence holds the potential to address global challenges, but it also poses risks of widening existing digital divides or creating new ones, the alliance said at the WEF Annual Meeting here.

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/davos-2024-global-alliance-calls-for-inclusive-access-to-advanced-ai-tech-124011800399\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/davos-2024-global-alliance-calls-for-inclusive-access-to-advanced-ai-tech-124011800399_1.html)