



May 20, 2024 – Monday

Economy

Share of women in urban salaried jobs at 6-year low in Q4FY24: PLFS

The share of women employed in regular salaried jobs in urban India hit a fresh low in the January-March quarter (Q4) of 2023-24 (FY24). In the same period, the share of women engaged in self-employment went up. An analysis of the latest quarterly Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) data showed the share of women in regular wage work among all employed women stood at 52.3 per cent in Q4FY24, down from 53 per cent in the previous quarter.

https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/urban-india-s-women-salaried-work-dips-to-6-year-low-in-q4fy24-plfs-124051900468_1.html

GDP growth rate likely to be 6.7% in Q4, around 7% in FY24: Ind-RA

India Ratings and Research expects the country's GDP growth rate for the March quarter at 6.7 per cent and around 6.9-7 per cent for the 2023-24 fiscal, its principal economist Sunil Kumar Sinha said. The GDP numbers for the fourth quarter (January-March 2024) and the provisional estimates for the 2023-24 fiscal are scheduled to be released by the government on May 31. The Indian economy grew 8.2 per cent in the June quarter, 8.1 per cent in the September quarter and 8.4 per cent in the December quarter of 2023-24.

https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/gdp-growth-rate-likely-to-be-6-7-in-q4-around-7-in-fy24-ind-ra-124051900209_1.html

Due to demand-supply mismatches, pulses inflation to stay high till October: Experts

Demand-supply mismatches could keep prices of pulses elevated until the new crop starts arriving in the market in October, putting further pressure on already high food inflation, say experts. Higher prices of pulses - tur, chana and urad - despite myriad measures to keep them under check have been a cause of concern for the government. "New crop comes October onwards, and given that tur production was down last year, there would be lower stocks, which will exert pressure on prices," said Madan Sabnavis, chief economist, Bank of Baroda. Monsoon's progress will drive sentiment on inflation in pulses, which will be in double digits till then, Sabnavis said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/ue-to-demand-supply-mismatches-pulses-inflation-to-stay-high-till-october-experts/articleshow/110254629.cms>

Finance

Banks want to regain power to issue lookout notices, to move FinMin

State-owned banks will jointly move the government to regain their power to stop dodgy borrowers from fleeing the country. Last week, several high-street banks took a decision to make a joint representation to the finance ministry for obtaining a statutory backing to their ability to issue 'look-out circulars' (LOCs) that alert immigration authorities and restrain errant, unresponsive borrowers from crossing the borders and escaping the local law enforcement agencies.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/banking/finance/banking/banks-want-to-regain-power-to-issue-lookout-notices-to-move-finmin/articleshow/110254746.cms>

Banks, NBFCs expand sales team amid digital clampdown

Banks and non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), focussed on retail lending and microfinance, are beefing up their sales teams, especially in tier-2 and tier-3 cities, amid a regulatory clampdown on digital banking and unsecured lending. TeamLease Services, a staffing firm, has 10,000-13,000 such open positions for this quarter, a 25-30 per cent increase over the year-ago period. This figure is expected to surge in the September quarter as credit card sales pick up ahead of the festive season. Financial year 2023-24 saw a jump of 20-25 per cent in sales staff hiring in tier-2 cities and a 30-35 per cent growth in tier-3 cities.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/money-and-banking/banks-nbfc-expand-sales-team-amid-digital-clampdown/article68193471.ece>

Non-fintech online PAs: Firms may reconsider payment aggregator biz

Online payment aggregators (PAs), especially those for whom PA service is not a core business, may reconsider being in the trade owing to challenges of scale, profitability, and a high cost of compliance. This comes as Zomato Payments, the wholly-owned subsidiary of food-delivery platform Zomato, last week voluntarily surrendered the certificate of authorisation issued by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as an online payment aggregator.

https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/compliance-costs-scale-may-prompt-firms-to-reconsider-pa-biz-s-viability-124051900432_1.html

Centre may get around ₹1 lakh crore in RBI dividend

Recent actions by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) suggest that it may transfer a higher dividend - possibly in the region of ₹1 lakh crore - to the government than last year, giving a potential boost to New Delhi's finances. Last week, the RBI announced a steep cut in the government's borrowing through Treasury Bills, reducing the amount of funds that the Centre would have garnered through these short-term instruments by ₹60,000 crore. The central bank also took some measures to ensure greater success of an upcoming operation where the government plans to prematurely pay back ₹60,000 crore of earlier borrowings.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/finance/centre-may-get-around-1-lakh-crore-in-rbi-dividend/articleshow/110254766.cms>

Industry

FAME-II guidelines clear and companies defaulted knowingly, says govt

The Centre has asserted that the Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric (& Hybrid) Vehicles in India (FAME-II) guidelines were clear and the companies defaulted the guidelines knowingly. The Ministry of Heavy Industries has formed a panel headed by the Additional Secretary to investigate the FAME-II scam and the role of government officials responsible for the Faster FAME-II subsidy irregularity.

https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/fame-ii-guidelines-clear-and-companies-defaulted-knowingly-says-govt-124051900611_1.html

Zinc demand in India likely to double in next 5-10 years: Industry body

The demand of zinc is expected to double in India in the next five to 10 years on the back of huge investments in infrastructure sector, including steel, International Zinc Association said on Sunday. The demand for zinc in India depends largely on the growth of the steel market as zinc is mainly used to galvanise steel to protect it from corrosion. "I see a doubling of the demand (for zinc) in the next five to 10 years. The market for primary and refined zinc in India is currently close to 800 to 1,000 tonnes (per annum) and has a great opportunity to increase with all the developments that we are witnessing in India.

https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/zinc-demand-in-india-likely-to-double-in-next-5-10-years-industry-body-124051900299_1.html

FSSAI asks traders, not to use banned 'calcium carbide' for fruit ripening

Food regulator FSSAI has asked traders and food business operators not to use the banned product 'calcium carbide' for ripening of fruits. In an official statement, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) said it has "alerted traders'/fruits handlers/Food Business Operators (FBOs) operating ripening chambers to strictly ensure

compliance with the prohibition on calcium carbide for artificial ripening of fruits, particularly during the mango season".

https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/fssai-asks-traders-not-to-use-banned-calcium-carbide-for-fruit-ripening-124051800940_1.html

Infrastructure

Indian airport operators to record revenue growth of 15-17% in FY25; passenger traffic to increase by 8-11% YoY, says ICRA

The overall air passenger traffic is expected to witness a growth of around 8-11 per cent on-year to around 407-418 million in FY2025, said a report by ICRA. The growth, it added, will be supported by strong pick-up in both leisure and business travel, improving connectivity to newer destinations in the domestic segment and the continued uptick in international travel. In FY2024, passenger traffic had already reached 376.4 million, up 15 per cent YoY, surpassing the pre-Covid level by 10 per cent.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/business/industry-indian-airport-operators-to-record-revenue-growth-of-15-17-in-fy25-passenger-traffic-to-increase-by-8-11-yoy-says-icra-3493360/>

"India to have world's second-largest urban metro system over next 2 years": Hardeep Singh Puri

Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, in an interaction with former judges, veterans of the armed forces, and intellectuals, underlined the development of urban metro transport in the past decade and said that the country will soon have the world's second-largest urban metro system in the next two and a half years.

Speaking to at the gathering here, Hardeep Puri said, "In today's day, the fact that needs to be reiterated is that there are 1 crore people riding on the metro every day, and out of the 1 crore people, 73 lakh are the ridership of the capital region of Delhi."

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/transportation/railways/india-to-have-worlds-second-largest-urban-metro-system-over-next-2-years-hardeep-singh-puri/articleshow/110258816.cms>

Energy

Oil firms blamed for ethanol stock pile-up

Ethanol distilleries in the country are faced with high and rising stock of the biofuel amid a demand-supply imbalance that, they allege, is because state-run oil marketing companies (OMCs) are not buying sufficient quantities. Two executives at OMCs, however, said they are buying as much ethanol as is required to meet the target of blending 15% ethanol in petrol. "The stock at ethanol producers is rising as OMCs are unable to lift enough quantity," said an ethanol industry executive who didn't want to be identified. "This could be due to limited storage capacity at OMCs' depots," the person added. State-run oil marketing companies Indian Oil, Hindustan Petroleum, and Bharat Petroleum purchase ethanol from diverse producers to blend it with petrol at their depots before supplying the fuel to pumps.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/oil-firms-blamed-for-ethanol-stock-pile-up/articleshow/110254624.cms>

Telecom

Telecom industry's attrition rate declines to 43.4% in FY24; industry sees demand for entry-level customer-facing, tech roles

The Indian telecom industry has seen a slowdown in overall workforce growth, even as demand for the entry-level customer-facing roles, including sales, support and service, and technology roles remained positive, latest data from TeamLease Services stated. Even as the industry's associate workforce expanded by 51.05 per cent in FY21-22, this growth moderated to 31.41 per cent in FY23-24. However, telecom companies continued to actively hire field sales executives, customer relationship executives, retail executives, installation engineers, fibre repair executives, and cell site repair staff during this period.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/business/industry-telecom-industrys-attrition-rate-declines-to-43-4-in-fy24-industry-sees-demand-for-entry-level-customer-facing-tech-roles-3493646/>

Govt targets cyber thieves

Telecom operators are likely to disconnect a record 1.8 million or so mobile connections at one go as part of the government's first countrywide operation to curb cybercrime and online fraud, officials said. This follows a comprehensive investigation by various law enforcement agencies to track misuse of mobile connections for committing cybercrime and financial fraud. "During investigations, it was detected that in many instances, a single handset was used with thousands of mobile connections," an official privy to the details told ET. On May 9, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) had asked telcos to disconnect 28,220 mobile handsets and re-verify over two million mobile connections misused with these handsets.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/telecom/telecom-news/band-ho-jaa-sim-sim-govt-targets-cyber-thieves/articleshow/110254811.cms>

External

Commerce ministry holds discussions on formulating SOPs to negotiate FTAs

The commerce ministry has held detailed discussions with senior officials of different departments and trade experts on formulating standard operating procedures (SOP) for negotiating free trade agreements (FTAs), an official said. To discuss the various aspects of these agreements, the commerce ministry has organised a two-day 'Chintan Shivir' on FTA strategy and SOPs for trade negotiations on May 16-17.

https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/commerce-ministry-holds-discussions-on-formulating-sops-to-negotiate-ftas-124051900300_1.html

Govt recovers Rs 852 cr under amnesty scheme for exporters: Official

The government has recovered about Rs 852 crore under the amnesty scheme for exporters for one-time settlement of default in export obligation by the holders of advance and EPCG authorisations, an official said. The figures are likely to increase further as the exercise is on for the compilation of the data, the official added. The government has fixed March 31 as the last date for payment of customs duty plus interest.

https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/government-recovers-rs-852-crore-under-amnesty-scheme-for-exporters-124051900222_1.html

India's oilmeal exports start 2024-25 on a weak note, drop 6% in April

India's overall oilmeal exports during April 2024 were 6 per cent lower on a yearly basis at 4.65 lakh tonnes. During the same month last year, the total exports were 4.93 lakh tonnes, industry data showed. In break up, exports of soybean meal rose while that of mustard meal declined. Oilmeals are the residue left over after the extraction of oil from oilseeds and it is widely utilized as livestock feed globally.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/indias-oilmeal-exports-start-2024-25-on-a-weak-note-drop-6-in-april/articleshow/110244232.cms>

India calls for details on ambit of proposed EU deforestation norms

India has sought information from the European Union about its proposed regulation that seeks to benchmark exporting countries as low or high risk basis deforestation levels. The EU's deforestation-free product regulation has implications for India's coffee, cocoa, soya, wood products, rubber and its products, and leather goods exports. The regulation requires firms to ensure that the product exported to the EU has been grown on land which has not been deforested after December 31, 2020. It prescribes fines up to 4% of a firm's annual turnover in the EU, confiscation of product and revenues gained from a transaction.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/india-calls-for-details-on-ambit-of-proposed-eu-deforestation-norms/articleshow/110254604.cms>

India, Eurasian Economic Union to soon start FTA negotiations

India will soon start negotiations for concluding a free trade agreement (FTA) with Russia-led Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) that will give the country a smooth access to markets of five resource-rich post-Soviet states. Indian exporters from sectors such as engineering goods, electronics and agriculture will get a boost from the agreement, experts on the EAEU said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/india-urasian-economic-union-to-soon-start-fta-negotiations/articleshow/110258506.cms>