



ECONOMY

Economic Growth/Reforms

1 GDP figures highly suspect: Cong

“Remonetisation is up substantially, and its combination with economic resilience has shown some signs of a return of growth,” Mr. Jaitley added. “Therefore I do expect that in the future quarters, this figure itself will grow further.”

1 Note ban credit positive as it will help cut tax avoidance: Moody’s

Demonetisation will be credit positive for India as it is likely to reduce tax avoidance and corruption, Moody’s Investors Service said on Wednesday.

2 GDP growth belies claims of rural distress: Jaitley

Hopeful of a further pickup in GDP growth, finance minister Arun Jaitley said that a 7 per cent growth in third quarter belies exaggerated claims of demonetisation’s impact on rural economy.

3 World Bank CEO lauds note ban, says economy will see positive impact

The government’s decision to ban high-value banknotes as part of efforts to stamp out corruption will have a profound and positive impact on India’s economy, World Bank chief executive Kristalina Georgieva said.

3 “India’s GDP growth appears solid”

Noted American economist Steve H Hanke has said that India’s economic growth for 2016-17 is appearing ‘solid’ because the GDP figures did not take into account adverse impact of demonetisation on informal economy.

4 Govt may unveil IIP, WPI with 2011-12 base year by April-end

The government may launch two macroeconomic indicators — the index of industrial production and the wholesale price index — with new base year 2011-12 by April-end to ensure compatibility with growth numbers.

5 CII throws weight behind GDP figures

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) is in agreement with the gross domestic product (GDP) data for the third quarter, put out by the Central Statistics Office, even as critics have found loopholes in the figures because these supposedly do not bear out the impact of demonetisation.

6 Fitch: Dec quarter GDP ‘somewhat surprising’

The US-based Fitch Ratings on Tuesday appeared to pick holes in the government’s 7 per cent growth estimate for the December quarter despite the cash crackdown, saying official data suggesting strong private consumption are at odds with real services activity.



Public Finance Taxes And Duties

6 GST levy may go up to 40% 4-slab structure to remain
The Council moots raising the peak rate in the Bill to 20%

The GST levy may go up to 40% after the GST Council proposed raising the peak rate in the Bill to 20%, from the current 14%, to obviate the need for approaching Parliament for any change in rates in future.

8 Small firms seek leeway on GST payment deadline

A section of the small businesses fears loss of their long-time buyers and resultant erosion of turnover once the Goods and Services Tax (GST) is implemented.

9 Council nod for two key GST bills

Crossing yet another milestone in the legislative process for the goods and services tax (GST) and keeping alive the hope of its rollout from July 1, the GST Council on Saturday approved the Central GST (CGST) and integrated GST (IGST) bills and resolved to get the state GST (SGST) and UT-GST bills approved on March 16, when the GST Council meets next.

10 The roadmap for GST implementation

Moving a step closer to the implementation of the goods and services tax (GST) from 1 July, the GST council cleared the drafts of two supporting laws—the central GST and integrated GST bills—at its 4 March meeting in Lev Delhi.

10 Fiscal Deficit Overshoots Full-year Target to 105%

The government's fiscal deficit for April-January 2017 overshot the budget estimate for the full year, although an expected pick-up in tax revenue in the quarter ending March is expected to help meet the target for FY17.

INDUSTRY

Industrial Growth & Production

11 Factory output expands, manufacturing PMI rises to 50.7 in February

A day after government data showed that the adverse impact of demonetisation on the economy was much lower than anticipated, two separate data releases on Wednesday indicated that companies and consumers are getting over any persisting cash crunch concerns.



12 DIPP draws up next-gen blueprint, Industry 4.0

For the most part, manufacturing in India has been really about the “real” world. But if a concept paper floated by the department of industrial policy and promotion (DIPP) materialises, a greater confluence of the real and the virtual isn’t far away.

13 Implementation of smart city projects yet to pick up pace

Almost two years after the NDA government’s flagship mission to develop 100 smart cities was launched, progress in the 60 cities selected so far is yet to pick up pace.

14 New trademark rules cut number of forms from 74 to 8

The new Trade Mark Rules 2017, which came into effect from March 6, 2017, have reduced the number of trade mark (TM) forms from 74 to 8.

14 Master Plan for Manufacturing Clusters Soon

In a major overhaul of the country's manufacturing strategy, the government is devising a National Master Plan for manufacturing clusters.

Infrastructure Projects Financing

15 World Bank proposes \$1 bn assistance to Maharashtra

The World Bank Tuesday proposed a financial assistance of \$1 billion to Maharashtra in critical projects related to urban transport and climate-resilient agriculture practices over the next two to three years.

16 Pollution norms for thermal power plants not deferred as yet

The Union environment ministry has not yet deferred the imposition of stricter pollution norms for thermal power plants, a demand the power ministry has repeatedly made.

17 Key Ministers to Address ET Infra Summit

India's top Cabinet ministers in the infrastructure domain will address. The Economic Times India Infra Summit 2017, which brings together policy makers and corporate leaders involved in accelerating the development of Railways, highways, ports, shipping, smart cities and housing.

18 ET India Infra Summit to Draw Road Map to Help Achieve Targets in a Sustainable Way

The ET India Infra Summit 2017 will draw a road map for achieving India’s infrastructure targets in a financially and environmentally sustainable way as the biggest policy makers and leading lights of the corporate sector delve into the core issues to speed up development of housing, highways, ports smart cities and railways.



CEMENT INDUSTRY

Growth/Marketing/Demand/Takeover

19 Cement production this fiscal on course for first decline in 15 years

Cement production volume in 2016-17 is likely to see a year-on-year (y-o-y) decline for the first time in 15 years as demonetization hit demand, analysts said.

Housing & Building Construction

20 IMGC bets big on affordable housing

In a bid to boost affordable housing, the Indian Mortgage Guarantee Corporation (IMGC) has launched a mortgage guarantee-linked home loan product.

ENERGY/FUEL/POWER

Coal

21 Govt planning series of coal-related pilot projects

The government plans to come up with a series of pilot projects in areas like coal gasification and coal-to-polychemicals next fiscal, a top official said today.

22 The petcoke threat to cement companies

While demand for cement has had its ups and downs each quarter, the one thing that remained constant is concern over petroleum coke or petcoke.

23 Singareni Collieries records new highs in coal output, dispatches

Singareni Collieries Company Limited has set a new record with coal production of 58.7 lakh tonnes and highest dispatches of 57 lakh tonnes in a month during February. The mining company's 1,200 MW power plant has also logged high plant load factor.

23 Coal price hike: SAIL didn't turn up for talks with CIL

State-owned Coal India raised the prices of coking coal in January without any discussion with its key customer SAIL as the steel major did not turn up for deliberations despite repeated pleas by the miner, a top official said on Monday.

24 Govt may clear new coal linkage policy for power plants soon

The Centre is likely to approve a new coal linkage policy next week for ensuring adequate supply of the fuel to power plants through reverse auction route. "The proposal on the scheme called 'SHAKTI' to provide coal linkages to power plants was listed on the agenda of the Cabinet meeting.



TRANSPORT

Railways

25 Freight to drive Railways' business in 2017-18

In what can be termed a Budget-like document, the Railways today released a Business Plan for 2017-18 to shore up revenues and make travel easier for passengers.

Highways/Roads/Bridges

26 J&K court forms teams to monitor road projects

Civil society group had moved HC on condition of roads

The J&K High Court has ordered the formation of special teams of lawyers to submit status reports of the major road projects in the Kashmir Valley.

27 Modi's pet projects roads to nowhere

Most of the mega highway projects for which foundation stones have been laid by Prime Minister Narendra Modi since August 2014 have made little or no progress due to a variety of reasons including problems of land acquisition, utility shifting, "protests by villagers" and cash crunch faced by contractors.

28 Roads sector: A case of missed targets again

With barely a month left for curtains to come down on fiscal year 2017, it looks like the roads sector is unlikely to meet targets again.

29 Highway projects to yield `12,000 cr investments for Gujarat: PM

Gujarat will get investments worth Rs. 12,000 crore as a result of the Highways Ministry's decision to convert 1200 km of state highways of national highways, said Prime Minister Narendra Modi here today.

30 WB to help govt prepare Logistics Performance Index

The World Bank is likely to assist the commerce ministry in preparing Logistics Performance Index (LPI) to rank states with a view to improve domestic as well as international trade.

30 Nagpur-Mumbai Expressway work to begin in Oct this year

The state government has decided to start work on the Nagpur-Mumbai Super Communication Expressway from October this year. The eight-lane project comprising 25 townships, called the Maharashtra Prosperity Corridor, will be completed over a period of 36 months.



31 Centre plans to hold franchise auctions for expressways

The highway ministry is planning to auction capital-intensive expressways to franchises after they are built.

LABOUR

General

32 EPFO introduces composite form for death cases also

Retirement fund body EPFO has introduced a composite claim form for their members in the case of death in order to reduce paperwork for dependants of the deceased.

33 EPF may cover more construction workers

Driven by a policy to extend social security benefits to workers who are currently outside its ambit, the government is considering lowering employers' liability towards Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) in the construction sector to 10% of the basic pay from 12% now.

34 Centre may increase dearness allowance by 2%, effective 1 Jan

The centre is likely to announce a hike of 2-4% in dearness allowance (DA) for about 50 lakh employees and 58 lakh pensioners later this month.

34 Lok Sabha passes Bill to raise maternity leave to 26 weeks; will benefit 1.8 million women

Women working in the organised sector will now be entitled to paid maternity leave of 26 weeks, up from 12 weeks, as Parliament today passed a Bill in this regard that will benefit about 1.8 million women.

MISCELLANEOUS

35 OECD estimates 7.3% growth in FY18

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) grouping has estimated India's economy to grow by 7.3 per cent in 2017-18 and 7.7 per cent the year after.

35 Cabinet nod on policy to make domestic steel use binding soon

The steel ministry will soon seek Cabinet nod on a proposed policy which will make it mandatory to use locally manufactured steel for all infrastructure and construction projects of the government, a top official said today.

**Tenders – Cement Concrete Roads
(CC1– CC12)**

37 Tenders – Housing (T13 – T19)

39 Tenders – Canal Lining (T20 – T22)

