



ECONOMY

Economic Growth/Reforms

1 Crisil blames divergent growth data-prints for WPI-CPI variance

With most analysts refusing to buy into the official growth numbers due to vast differences between GDP and GVA, a Crisil analysis has blamed the variance to the steeply falling WPI and the more-or-less stable CPI.

Inflation/Recession

2 India February CPI inflation at 3.65%

India's consumer price inflation (CPI) inched up to 3.65% in February from 3.17% in January as food prices started rising, government data showed on Tuesday, as remonetisation pace picked up pace and spurred consumption demand.

Public Finance Taxes And Duties

3 GST: Industry sees no relief on compliance

With the central government keeping many regressive provisions in the final draft of the goods and services (GST) law to get reluctant states on board, the ambitious tax reform may not ease the compliance burden or improve the ease of doing business as significantly as earlier thought.

4 GST closer to reality as council clears last 2 bills

The goods and services tax (GST) council on Thursday gave its nod to the two remaining pieces of supporting legislation for implementing the landmark tax reform, paving the way for their introduction in Parliament and state legislatures.

TRADE & COMMERCE

Import/Export

5 Government to launch new scheme to fund export infrastructure

A new scheme will be launched in 2017-18 to create infrastructure for exports, a move aimed at reducing transaction costs for traders. "A new and restructured central scheme with a focus on export infrastructure, namely, Trade Infrastructure for Export Scheme (TIES) will be launched in 2017-18," Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said in his Budget speech.

6 Exports jump 17.5% to \$24.5 bn in February

Rising for the sixth straight month, exports posted a 17.48 per cent year-on-year hike in February, the highest rate in more than five years.



INDUSTRY

Industrial Growth & Production

7 Show-cause notices to 1,018 firms for CSR norms violation

The government has issued show-cause notices to 1,018 companies in 2014-15 for violating corporate social responsibility (CSR) norms under the Companies Act, 2013, Minister of State for Corporate Affairs Arjun Ram Meghwal informed the Lok Sabha in a written reply on Friday.

CEMENT INDUSTRY

Growth/Marketing/Demand/Takeover

8 Demonetisation: Cement production on course for first decline in 15 years

Cement production in 2016-17 is likely to see a year-on-year (y-o-y) decline for the first time since 2001 as the 8 November demonetisation hit the building sector, analysts said.

Financing/Public Issues/Shares

9 Ambuja Cements, ACC gain on Cabinet nod for stake buy in Holcim India

Ambuja Cements shares gained 2 per cent and were among top gainers on NSE on Thursday after the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved the company's proposal to acquire 24 per cent stake in its holding firm Holcim India, paving way for restructuring of its parent Swiss giant Lafarge-Holcim to strengthen India footprint.

Housing & Building Construction

10 National Property Index stagnant in October-December

The National Property Index has remained stagnant during the fourth quarter, at the same level as that in the third quarter, with ready-to-move properties witnessing a price fall of 0.4% and under-construction properties witnessing a price rise of 0.8%.

ENERGY, FUEL & POWER

Coal

10 Soon you can withdraw 90% of EPF money to make down payment for that dream home

In what could come as a big relief to home buyers, the government is looking to amend the Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) scheme to allow its members to withdraw up to 90% of their savings in the fund for making down payments while buying a home.



Power Projects, Generation, Distribution & Tariff

Power plants lost 5.9 b units in 11 months on water shortage

- 11 A whopping 5.87 billion units (BU) of-generation loss has been reported by power utilities due to non-availability of water during 11 months in the current financial year.

TRANSPORT

Railways

Changes in rail tariffs only after regulator in place

- 12 As a follow-up to the historic decision to merge the railway Budget with the general Budget, the Union government is likely to present the Bill to set up an independent regulator for the railways in the next session of Parliament.

Highways/Roads/Bridges

Smart Cities Need A Smart Leadership

- 13 Building smart cities needs top-quality local leadership, urban development minister M Venkaiah Naidu told the Economic Times India Infra Summit 2017, even as corporate leaders on the panel debated the key elements that defined a smart city.

Expediting Clearances Crucial for the Economy

- 14 India has adequate growth underpinnings for infrastructure, but challenges in acquiring land and securing environmental clearances delay airports, roads, or ports in the world's fastest-expanding major economy.

Centre misses road target by 50%

- 15 The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) is set to miss its highway construction target by almost 50%. With 6,604 kms of highways made during the initial 11 months, in the last month of March it is likely to touch around 7,000 kms, which is less than half of the annual target of 15,000 kms.

Road Ministry wants core status for multi-nodal logistics parks

- 16 The Road Transport and Highways ministry has demanded infrastructure status to multi-modal logistics parks in a bid to avail long-term funding for various projects at lower rates of interest.

Government to miss roads target amid financial closure issues

- 16 The government is likely to miss the FY17 target of awarding road projects by a wide margin.



HAM road projects hit fin closure hurdle

- 17 Union road transport & highways minister Nitin Gadkari had announced awarding of 15,000 km of highways this fiscal with much fanfare, but achieving financial closure for the newly introduced hybrid annuity model (HAM) is turning out to be a nightmare for developers.

Inland Waterways & Irrigation Canals

Govt introduces bill on inter-state river water row in Lok Sabha

- 18 A bill proposing a single tribunal to wrap up long-festering inter-state water sharing disputes within four-and-a-half years was introduced in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday.

LABOUR

General

Cabinet may clear raising tax-free gratuity ceiling to Rs.20 lakh

- 19 The Union cabinet is likely to consider on Wednesday a draft amendment bill which seeks to double the ceiling of tax-free gratuity to Rs.20 lakh under the Payment of Gratuity Act.

MISCELLANEOUS

IEA says oil market could tilt into deficit in the first half if OPEC sticks to cuts

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The IEA said crude stocks in the world's richest nations rose in January for the first time since July by 48 million barrels to 3.03 billion barrels, more than 300 million barrels above the five-year average.

India Inc's dividend pay at record high

- 21 Corporate India is using higher dividends to reward shareholders, even as earnings growth remains elusive. The dividend payout ratio for the country's top listed companies reached an all-time high of 40.5 per cent in FY16, from the low of 20 per cent in FY08.

Tenders – Cement Concrete Roads (CC1– CC13)

Tenders – Housing (T14 - T17)

23

Tenders – Canal Lining (T18)

23

Articles/Interviews (A1-A4)

A1

