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ECONOMY

IMF sounds alarm on India's rising debt

Date: 21 December 2023



The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has issued a cautionary note, warning that India's general government debt could surpass 100% of the GDP in the medium term, the Business Standard reported. This alert, highlighted in the annual Article IV consultation report, emphasises the need for new financing sources, greater private sector investment, and climate-resilience measures. The IMF points out that substantial investment is required to enhance India's capacity to withstand climate stresses and natural disasters.

Source: WION

TRADE

Exports dipped again in November, but trade deficit eases

Date: 17 December 2023

India's goods exports slipped back into contraction to drop 2.83% in November to \$33.9 billion, while imports fell by a sharper 4.33% to \$54.48 billion. Exports had recorded only their second uptick this year in October, and though the value of outbound shipments was up 1.1% on a month-on-month basis, they still marked the second-weakest level since November 2022. The trade deficit for November eased sharply beyond expectations to \$20.58 billion from the all-time high of \$29.91 billion recorded in October.



Source: The Hindu

FOREX

India's forex reserves hit 20-month high

Date: 22 December 2023



India's foreign exchange reserves rose for the fifth straight week, reaching an over 20-month high of \$615.97 billion as of December 15, according to the data by RBI. The reserves rose by \$9.1 billion in the reporting week after a jump of \$16.5 billion in the prior four weeks. It is worth noting that the Indian debt and equity market witnessed increased net inflows in December. Till now, the net inflows have swollen to \$9.2 billion in December. The amount stood at \$2.9 billion in November.

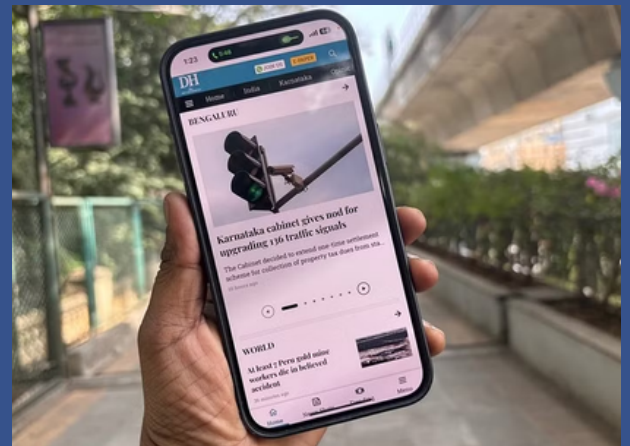
Source: Mint

TELECOM

New Telecom Bill allows govt to take temporary control of services

Date: 22 December 2023

The government passed a new Telecommunications Bill, 2023. The new bill makes it mandatory for companies to get prior consent from subscribers to receive specified messages such as advertising messages. Also, they should set up Do Not Disturb registers, and create a mechanism to allow users to report malware or specified messages. The Bill also allows the Centre to take possession of a telecom network in case of any public emergency or in the interest of public safety.



Source: Deccan Herald

ENERGY

India attracts \$6.1 billion FDI in renewable sector

Date: 20 December 2023



India's renewable energy sector has attracted FDI of \$6.1 billion from April 2020 to September 2023, Union minister for new & renewable energy and power R K Singh said in a written response to a question in the Rajya Sabha. "As per information available with the DPIIT, the country has received a total FDI Equity investment amounting to USD 6,137.39 Million in the renewable energy sector, during the last three financial years and the current financial year (till 30.09.2023)," the minister said in a statement.

Source: ET Energyworld

AUTOMOBILE

India's auto parts makers' H1FY24 sales up at ₹2.98 tn

Date: 20 December 2023

India's auto parts makers generated a revenue of ₹2.98 trillion in the first half this fiscal year, driven by robust demand from automotive original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and a slight increase in exports despite high inflation in the western markets. The H1FY24 turnover marked a 12.6% increase from the same period a year earlier. Data released by ACMA, the country's apex body of auto parts makers, said that exports of auto components grew marginally by 2.7% to \$10.4 billion, while imports rose 3.6% to \$10.6 billion.



Source: Mint

News from International Publications

PM Narendra Modi responds to assassination claims

Date: 21 December 2023



PM Narendra Modi has for the first time responded to allegations of an Indian assassination plot in the US, saying he will “look into” any evidence but a “few incidents” would not derail US-India ties. “If someone gives us any information, we would definitely look into it,” Modi said. “If a citizen of ours has done anything good or bad, we are ready to look into it. Our commitment is to the rule of law.”

Source: Financial Times

Despite agreement, nations and companies lack plans to phase out fossil fuels

Date: 21 December 2023

Last week, world leaders celebrated a climate first: a call by nearly 200 countries to “transition away” from fossil fuels. Many heralded the agreement as a new phase in climate talks and the beginning of the end of fossil fuels. But beneath the UN agreement lies a darker truth: No fossil fuel company or country has a real plan for phasing out fossil fuels. On the contrary, almost all expect to continue extracting coal, oil and gas far into the future far beyond what is needed to cut emissions in line with climate goals of keeping global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, or even 2 degrees Celsius.



Source: The Washington Post

News from International Publications

UK inflation falls to 3.9% in November

Date: 21 December 2023



UK inflation slowed sharply in November to 3.9%, triggering a slide in the pound, a stock market rally and increased expectations of an interest-rate cut early next year. Wednesday's number was well below the 4.4% year-on-year increase in consumer prices predicted by economists in a Reuters poll, as inflation was tugged lower by petrol, food and leisure. The 3.9% figure was also the lowest inflation rate since September 2021, fuelling speculation about when the Bank of England will reduce interest rates from their 15-year high.

Source: Financial Times

IIT-Delhi Abu Dhabi to 25 seats in 2024

Date: 19 December 2023

The Indian Institute of Technology Delhi Abu Dhabi's (IIT-Delhi Abu Dhabi) inaugural batch will offer 25 seats, a top official has said. The programme at the first international campus of IIT-Delhi will see both Emiratis and international students enroll, he told Khaleej Times in an exclusive interview. "Potentially, we will look into increasing the number of seats in response to a sustained rise in demand," said Dr Ahmed Sultan Al Shoaibi, acting executive director of Higher Education Sector, Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (Adek).



Source: Khaleej Times

News from International Publications

US and UK tighten enforcement of Russian oil price cap

Date: 21 December 2023



The UK and US are tightening rules around the shipping of Russian oil in an attempt to make it harder for Moscow to circumvent the so-called price cap, a policy aimed at squeezing the Kremlin’s revenue from crude. Companies involved in shipping Russian oil will need to prepare fresh documentation to show that each voyage has complied with the G7 price cap, rather than generic reassurances that the law would be obeyed, under the rules published.

Source: Financial Times

Bharat Mart could become operational in Jafza by 2025

Date: 19 December 2023

Bharat Mart, a massive warehousing complex underway in the Jebel Ali Free Zone to enable Indian exporters to showcase and distribute their products under one roof, could become operational by 2025. A multipurpose facility offering a mix of warehouse, retail and hospitality units, Bharat Mart is the second phase of Jafza’s game changing “Dubai Traders Market” initiative following the launch of China’s Yiwu Market and seeks to revolutionise the trading experience for Indian traders and consumers in Jafza, a DP World company.



Source: Khaleej Times

News from International Publications

French minister quits as Macron toughens immigration law

Date: 19 December 2023



Emmanuel Macron's health minister has resigned after the French president salvaged his immigration reform in parliament by making it harsher and thanks to the support of far-right leader Marine Le Pen. Tuesday's late-night vote ended 10 days of wrangling during which the government lost control of its long-promised immigration plans and toughened the law to win the votes of conservative lawmakers. The tussle reflects how Macron can no longer impose legislation now that his centrist alliance does not have a parliamentary majority, and will add to concerns over his ability to govern.

Source: Financial Times

UAE among top destinations for remote work

Date: 19 December 2023

The UAE has ranked first in the Middle East and fourth globally as a leading destination for remote work, according to a new ranking by VisaGuide.World. A world leader in the field, the VisaGuide.World website specialises in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of visa systems. The website also measures countries' progress in providing a conducive and attractive environment for talent in the digital field and other facilities. The UAE ranked fourth after Spain, Argentina, and Romania, according to the website, which develops rankings based on a variety of factors



Source: Khaleej Times

News from International Publications

Brussels tightens debt-reduction regulations

Date: 21 December 2023



EU finance ministers have bowed to German calls for tough debt-reduction rules in a deal to phase in an overhaul of the bloc's budget framework. The package gives EU member states greater independence in agreeing on debt and deficit plans with Brussels, but only within tight spending limits demanded by fiscal hawks. Although high-debt states were given some extra wriggle room as part of a transition period, the new framework included stricter overall limits on spending that were crucial to winning over Germany, which was deeply sceptical about the original reforms.

Source: Financial Times