

veKL Y NEWS WRAP

February 17, 2024 / 68



INFLATION

WPI inflation eases as food prices soften in January

Date: 15 February 2024



Wholesale price inflation softened marginally in Jan, led by easing in food and manufactured product inflation. Inflation in pulses (16.1%) remained in double digits. Data showed inflation, as measured by Wholesale Price Index (WPI), slowed to 0.3% in Jan from 0.7% in Dec. Food inflation moderated to 3.8% during the month, slower than the 5.4% in Dec. WPI inflation had remained in negative territory for several months as prices of manufactured goods and fuel had remained subdued.

Source: The Times of India

ECONOMY

India successfully built best digital economy

Date: 15 February 2024

India is a major economy with the highest potential growth rate right now, Nobel laureate economist A Michael Spence said. While addressing students and faculty at the Bennett University in Greater Noida, Spence said, "The major economy with the highest potential growth rate right now is India. India has successfully developed by far the best digital economy and finance architecture in the world. It is open, competitive and delivers services of an inclusive kind to a vast array of territory."



Source: Moneycontrol

TRADE

Trade deficit in Jan dips as imports fall more than exports

Date: 14 February 2024



India's goods trade deficit narrowed by almost 12% in January compared with the previous month, as imports fell more steeply than exports. The merchandise trade deficit narrowed to \$17.49 billion in January 2024 from \$19.80 billion in December 2023, largely because imports declined to \$54.41 billion against the \$58.25 billion recorded in December, commerce ministry data showed. Goods exports fell marginally to \$36.92 billion in January, from \$38.45 billion in December. The decline in exports is mainly due to armed conflict in the Red Sea.

Source: Mint

ENERGY

Adani Green Energy begins generation from world's largest energy park

Date: 14 February 2024

Adani Green Energy announced that energy generation from the world's largest renewable energy park has begun. Adani Green says that it has operationalised 551 MW solar capacity in Gujarat's Khavda by supplying power in the national grid. Following the announcement, Adani Green Energy stock rose 3.57% to hit a high of Rs 1,882. The energy company plans to develop 30 GW of renewable energy capacity at the Khavda Park, operational in the next five years.



Source: Business Today

PETROLEUM

Govt hikes windfall tax on petroleum crude to Rs 3,300 a tonne

Date: 15 February 2024



The Indian government is increasing the windfall tax on petroleum crude to 3,300 rupees (\$39.76) a metric ton from 3,200 rupees with effect from February 16. It will also increase a windfall tax on diesel, which had been reduced to zero, to 1.50 rupees a litre. The windfall tax on aviation turbine fuel (ATF) and petrol will continue to be zero. On February 3, India raised windfall tax on petroleum crude to 3,200 rupees/tonne from 1,700 rupees a tonne, while keeping the tax on diesel, ATF and petrol at zero.

Source: Business Standard

PHARMACEUTICAL

India assures of protection to its pharma industry

Date: 15 February 2024

India has assured that it is not proceeding with anything against its pharmaceutical industry in the ongoing Free Trade Agreement talks with several countries and trading blocs. The Commerce Ministry has stated that during the FTA discussions with European Free Trade Association (EFTA) member countries, India rejected Switzerland's demand for data exclusivity for medicines. EFTA comprises Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Iceland. The Commerce Ministry has emphasised the importance of ensuring the flourishing of the country's generic drugs industry, contributing to both exports and domestic needs.



Source: CNBC TV 18

AUTOMOBILE

BPCL Begins Pilot For Use Of Hydrogen In Automobile Sector

Date: 15 February 2024



Bharat Petroleum Corp. has commenced a pilot project to gain experience in handling hydrogen for the automobile sector. The pilot project is undertaken at an investment of approximately Rs 25 crore. The project is planned in collaboration with the Cochin International Airport Ltd., and a Memorandum of Understanding was signed on February 14. The state-owned company said this after the stock exchange sought clarification on media reports that it is to set up the first-ever green hydrogen plant in an Indian airport.

Source: NDTV Profit

STEEL

Centre extends 'public utility' deadline for iron and steel industries

Date: 15 February 2024

Days after the government extended the 'public utility' label for aluminium industries and bauxite mining, the Centre has also classified iron and steel as 'public utility' for the next six months. A public utility service refers to an industry or service considered essential for the community's well-being and functioning. These services are deemed so critical that disruptions or stoppages can extensively impact public life and cause hardship.



Source: Business Standard

News from International Publications

India oppositions alliance fractures as support for Modi soars

Date: 15 February 2024



India's best chance of challenging Narendra Modi is disintegrating months before national elections, as a broad but fragile opposition coalition breaks down over internal rivalries, defections and arrests and intimidation by law enforcement. The alliance of centre-left and regional parties, unveiled last July under the banner of the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance, or INDIA, presented itself as a unity front to prevent India's powerful prime minister and his majoritarian Bharatiya Janata party from coasting to a third term in power.

Source: Financial Times

Inflation Clouds Rate-Cut Path

Date: 14 February 2024

Inflation eased again in January but came in above Wall Street's expectations, clouding the Federal Reserve's path to rate cuts and potentially giving the central bank breathing space to wait until the middle of the year. The Labor Department reported Tuesday that consumer prices rose 3.1% in January from a year earlier, versus a December gain of 3.4%. That marked the lowest reading since June. Still, the consumer-price index was higher than the predicted 2.9%, a disappointment for investors who hope the Fed will cut rates sooner rather than later.



Source: The Wall Street Journal

News from International Publications

Wage growth slowdown unlikely to spur rate cut

Date: 14 February 2024



Wage growth eased less than expected in the three months to December, according to official data that will give the Bank of England new grounds for caution over the timing of a first cut in interest rates. The annual pace of growth in average weekly earnings, including bonuses, slowed to 5.8% over the period, the Office for National Statistics said. The figure was down from a summer peak of 8.5% and from 6.7% in the three months to November.

Source: Financial Times

Most NATO members to hit spending goal in 'Trump containment' strategy

Date: 14 February 2024

Nato is expected to announce that most members are on track to hit a key defence spending target as the alliance prepares for more Russian aggression and braces itself for the potential election of Donald Trump. According to three officials, Nato will say 18 of its 31 members will this year meet its target of spending 2% of gross domestic product on defence, with the number likely to rise as budgets are adjusted.

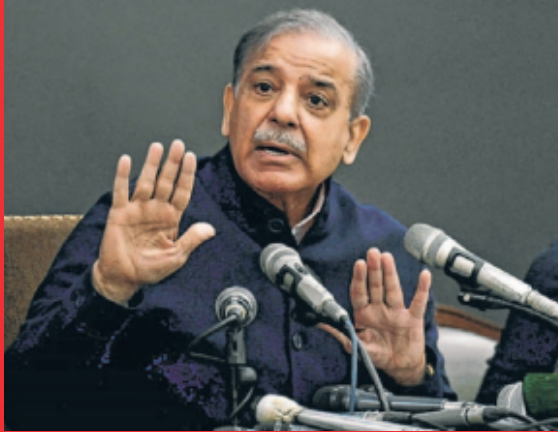


Source: Financial Times

News from International Publications

Sharif's Party Forms Coalition in Pakistan

Date: 14 February 2024



Pakistan - a coalition government led by the party of a former prime minister was announced after elections last week failed to show a winner with a single majority. The new coalition excludes the party of jailed opposition leader Imran Khan which won the most seats in the February 8 contest. Under the deal, Shehbaz Sharif, younger brother of three-term Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, will serve again as prime minister, his party said. The party, PML-N, took the second most seats in this month's election, which was marred by allegations of rigging.

Source: The Wall Street Journal

US Senate clears a \$95bn security bill including aid for Ukraine

Date: 14 February 2024

The US Senate has approved a \$95bn national security funding bill including new aid to Ukraine, but the legislation risks languishing in the House of Representatives because of opposition from Donald Trump. The final vote on the bill in the Senate followed weeks of pressure from Joe Biden's administration and a deepening rift among Republican senators on the merits of providing more assistance to Ukraine, alongside the broader question of the US's role in the world.



Source: Financial Times

News from International Publications

China's Baby Bust Is Hard to Reverse

Date: 13 February 2024



China's baby bust is happening faster than many expected, raising fears of a demographic collapse. And coping with the fallout may now be complicated by miscalculations made more than 40 years ago. The rapid shift underway today wasn't projected by the architects of China's one-child policy—one of the biggest social experiments in history, instituted in 1980. At the time, governments around the world feared overpopulation would hold back economic growth.

Source: The Wall Street Journal

Bezos sells \$4bn worth of Amazon stock in one week

Date: 15 February 2024

Amazon's billionaire founder Jeff Bezos has sold another \$2bn worth of the company's stock, bringing the total value of shares he has offloaded in the past week to \$4bn, according to regulatory filings. An Amazon filing showed that Bezos, who stepped down as the Seattle-based company's chief executive in 2021 but remains executive chair, sold 12mn shares for about \$2bn between Friday and Monday. That follows earlier sales of about 12mn shares, also totalling about \$2bn. last week, filings show.



Source: Financial Times

News from International Publications

Trump trial schedule coming into focus

Date: 15 February 2024



Donald Trump is expected at the defendant's table in a Manhattan courtroom for a conference that could confirm he'll be tried next month for allegedly falsifying hush money repayment records & the first criminal trial of a former U.S. president. At the same hour in Atlanta, a team of Trump's lawyers will appear with some of his co-defendants for a hearing in a separate indictment, in which Trump and others are accused of a vast scheme to overturn Georgia's 2020 election results. That hearing will focus on alleged misconduct by the prosecutor.

Source: The Washington Post

EU open to telecoms mergers for investment boost

Date: 15 February 2024

Brussels has signalled that it is open to European telecoms mergers to help fund the rollout of 5G and update ageing networks-in what is likely to be seen as a softening of approach after regulators quashed several potential deals in recent years. Europe's biggest telecoms groups have been calling on the European Commission to help them invest billions in the rollout of 5G and full-fibre networks, including through in-market consolidation and demanding that Big Tech groups pay a "fair" contribution for using their networks.



Source: Financial Times

VEKLY NEWSWRAP, a RV-VeKommunicate LLP property, is a round up of important national and international news from different sector, during the last 1 week. The information is compiled basis the 'sources' mentioned.