

March 13, 2026 – Friday

Economy

India's February retail inflation quickens to 3.21% before Iran war impact hits

India's retail inflation stood at 3.21% in February, according to data released on Thursday, amid trade uncertainty and geopolitical tensions in the Middle East. The Consumer Price Index (CPI)-based inflation had stood at 2.74% in January under the revised CPI series with 2024 as the base year. The latest inflation print comes at a time when tensions involving Iran, Israel and the United States have raised concerns about disruptions to global oil supplies. Economists say prolonged supply constraints could translate into imported inflation for energy-dependent economies such as India.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/indias-february-retail-inflation-quickens-to-3-21-before-iran-war-impact-likely-hits/articleshow/129502418.cms

Finance

New LCR norms could help banks expand credit by 7%

The revised Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR) norms, set to take effect from April 1 could give banks additional room to expand credit by about 7%, assuming deposit growth remains steady at the current 10% pace, analysts said. A report from brokerage Motilal Oswal said the shift toward an LCR-based framework for assessing liquidity and lending capacity will allow banks to deploy surplus liquidity currently parked on their balance sheets into loans. As a result, loan-to-deposit ratios (LDRs) could theoretically rise by 3-12% across the brokerage's coverage universe, with public sector banks (PSBs) set to be key beneficiaries.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/banking/finance/banking/new-lcr-norms-could-help-banks-expand-credit-by-7/articleshow/129522476.cms

SEBI proposes streamlined inheritance process for securities, higher claim limits

Capital markets regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has proposed sweeping changes to simplify the process for transmission of securities following the death of an investor, including raising threshold limits for simplified documentation and introducing a new fast-track mechanism for small claims.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/markets/sebi-proposes-streamlined-inheritance-process-for-securities-higher-claim-limits/article70735486.ece

Banks urged to devise low-interest loans for retail, MSME clients

The government has asked banks to devise low-interest loan schemes for retail borrowers as well as micro and small enterprises, and explore credit products for tribals who may lack collateral. Banks are expected to share inputs by the end of this month and implement the schemes early next financial year, said people familiar with the development. "Banks have been asked to look at various loan schemes and further build upon the existing models such as Grameen Credit Score and the Stand Up India 2.0 scheme," a government official said on condition of anonymity, adding that the aim is to push credit growth.

https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/banking/finance/banking/banks-urged-to-devise-low-interest-loans-for-retail-msme-clients/articleshow/129521703.cms

Banks directed to monitor non-submission of digital life certificates for pension: Centre to Rajya Sabha

All pension disbursing banks have been directed to monitor non-submission of digital life certificates by pensioners and to make arrangements to ensure their submission, the Rajya Sabha was informed on Thursday. To address the issue of difficulty in submission of digital life certificate (DLCs) through biometric mechanisms for elderly pensioners, the Government of India has launched the face authentication technique which requires only a smartphone for generation of DLCs, Union Minister of State for Personnel Jitendra Singh said in a written reply to a question.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/banking/finance/banking/banks-directed-to-monitor-non-submission-of-digital-life-certificates-for-pension-centre-to-rajya-sabha/articleshow/129510956.cms

Overseas crypto earnings of moonlighters under I-T lens

The income-tax department has detected cases of professionals moonlighting for overseas firms and receiving payments in cryptocurrencies that were not disclosed in their tax filings, people familiar with the matter said. The department has begun sending out intimation emails to such taxpayers, seeking explanations for unreported income and foreign assets.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/overseas-crypto-earnings-of-moonlighters-under-i-t-lens/articleshow/129522649.cms

Fixed tenures may be next for upper-layer NBFC chiefs under new norms

A fixed tenure for corner-room occupants in Reserve Bank of India (RBI) “upper-layer” non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) may be in the works. The issue figured at a Department of Financial Services meeting on NBFCs chaired by Finance Secretary M Nagaraju on Thursday. It appeared under the agenda item “Governance reforms to include better leadership rotation”, along with “Clarity on NBFCs as potential banks”. Many upper-layer NBFCs are hopeful of securing private bank licences, and the “idea may be to prepare them for the transition”, said a source.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/fixed-tenures-may-be-next-for-upper-layer-nbfc-chiefs-under-new-norms-126031201337_1.html

Industry

West Asia Crisis: Indian paper industry faces rising energy cost, export disruption

The Indian paper industry is facing various challenges, such as a rise in energy costs and a potential disruption in export markets due to the ongoing crisis in West Asia. West Asia is one of the most important export destinations, as in 2024-25, India exported paper and paperboard worth about USD 980 million, of which nearly USD 290 million (close to 30 per cent) was shipped to the region, said the paper industry body IPMA. The key product categories include uncoated writing and printing paper, coated paper and paperboard, and kraft paper, the Indian Paper Manufacture Association (IPMA) said in a statement.
http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/indl-goods/svs/paper-/-wood-/-glass/-plastic/-marbles/west-asia-crisis-indian-paper-industry-faces-rising-energy-cost-export-disruption/articleshow/129512464.cms

Parliamentary committee flags startup exclusion in auto PLI scheme

A parliamentary panel has recommended that the ministry of heavy industries (MHI) review eligibility conditions in the automobile production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme, to ensure domestic start-ups are not excluded, extend incentives under the PM PM E-Drive scheme to electric four-wheelers, and accelerate the upgrade of automotive testing agencies to avoid certification bottlenecks. The recommendations were made by the parliamentary standing committee, chaired by DMK MP Tiruchi Siva, which tabled its 332nd report on the demands for grants of the MHI for 2026-27 in Rajya Sabha on Wednesday.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/auto/parliamentary-panel-flags-startup-exclusion-in-auto-pli-scheme-126031201318_1.html

Agriculture

Storage in 35% of India's key reservoirs down below 50% of capacity

Storage in at least 35 per cent of India's major 166 reservoirs dropped below 50 per cent of the capacity even as the overall level dropped below 55 per cent, data from Central Water Commission (CWC). The CWC said in its weekly bulletin on Thursday that the level dropped to 54 per cent of the 183.565 billion cubic BCM of the capacity at 98.913 BCM. Storage is 12 percentage points higher than last year and 27 per cent more than normal (past 10 years).
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/storage-in-35-of-indias-key-reservoirs-down-below-50-of-capacity/article70735792.ece

India may extend duty-free pulses imports beyond March 31 on Iran war, El Nino possibility

Amid forecast of an El Nino this year and ongoing disruptions in the war- torn West Asia pushing up freight costs, the Indian government is likely to extend the duty-free import window for pulses such as pigeon pea (tur) and black matpe (urad) to ensure adequate supplies. The duty-free import window for pigeon pea and black matpe ends on March 31, while the stakeholders are expecting an extension considering that India is deficit in these categories of pulses.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/india-may-extend-duty-free-pulses-imports-beyond-march-31-on-iran-war-el-nino-possibility/article70735702.ece

Energy

Iran threatens to 'set region's oil and gas on fire' if energy infrastructure attacked

Iran threatened on Thursday to wreak havoc on the region's oil and gas industry if its own energy infrastructure was attacked during its war with the US and Israel. "We will set the region's oil and gas on fire with the slightest attack on Iran's energy infrastructure and ports," said a spokesman for the Iranian military's central operational command, known as Khatam al-Anbiya.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/iran-threatens-to-set-regions-oil-and-gas-on-fire-if-energy-infrastructure-attacked/articleshow/129531774.cms

Exporters seek priority allocation of LPG and natural gas for manufacturing units

Exporters' body FIEO on Thursday urged the government to allocate LPG and natural gas to export-oriented manufacturing units on a priority basis, as any disruptions in the fuel availability will create problems in maintaining production schedules. Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) President S C Ralhan said that he has written a letter in this regard to the commerce and industry ministry.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/lpg-crisis-exporters-seek-priority-allocation-of-lpg-and-natural-gas-for-manufacturing-units/articleshow/129502998.cms

IEA's record oil release will ease pressure, say Indian refiners

Indian refinery executives expect supply pressures to ease partly after the IEA said Wednesday that its 32 member countries will make 400 million barrels of oil available to the market at a pace determined by each country. The timing of the release will be crucial, executives said. If a large volume is released quickly-sufficient to prevent those countries from seeking barrels from the international market -it would make it easier for buyers such as India to secure supplies, an executive said. As pressure on global supplies eases, prices will begin to reflect that, he added.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/ieas-record-oil-release-will-ease-pressure-say-indian-refiners/articleshow/129522455.cms

Govt allocates 40,000 kilolitre of additional kerosene to states amid West Asia turmoil

Amid the ongoing crisis in West Asia, the government on Thursday said that 40,000 kilolitre of additional kerosene has been allocated to states as an alternative fuel to LPG. Some more commercial LPG cylinders will be released to beneficiaries identified by state governments, said Sujata Sharma, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/govt-allocates-40000-kilolitre-of-additional-kerosene-to-states-amid-west-asia-turmoil/articleshow/129509391.cms

About 6,600 MW nuclear capacity under construction in India

Around 6,600 megawatt nuclear capacity is under construction, and another 7,000 megawatt is under various stages of planning and approval, Power Minister Manohar Lal said on Thursday. The minister also said that 12,723.50 MW of hydroelectric projects are under construction. Further, 4,274 megawatt (MW) of hydroelectric projects are under various stages of planning and targeted to be completed by 2031-32, he said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/power/about-6600-mw-nuclear-capacity-under-construction-in-india/articleshow/129510660.cms

Telecom

Govt approves 104 projects worth Rs 271 crore for 6G tech research

The government has approved 104 projects worth Rs 271 crore for research and development of 6G Technology under the Telecom Technology Development Fund, Parliament was informed on Thursday. In a written reply to the Rajya Sabha, Minister of State for Telecom Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani said the government released the Bharat 6G Vision Document in March 2023, outlining India's roadmap for research, development and deployment of 6G technologies with the objective of positioning India among global leaders in 6G by 2030.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/telecom/telecom-news/govt-approves-104-projects-worth-rs-271-crore-for-6g-tech-research-mos-telecom/articleshow/129513557.cms

States

Madhya Pradesh gets Centre's nod to extend Bhavantar scheme to mustard

The Central government has cleared a Madhya Pradesh government proposal to extend the price deficiency support scheme, also called the Bhavantar Bhugtan Yojana (BBY), to mustard procurement after its use for soybean in 2025. The scheme is meant to protect farmers from price volatility. The decision to extend the scheme to mustard was taken at a meeting in Delhi today between Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav and Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/agriculture/madhya-pradesh-gets-centre-s-nod-to-extend-bhavantar-scheme-to-mustard-126031200851_1.html

Healthcare

Medical tourism from key West Asia market faces disruptions

India’s medical tourism sector is seeing early signs of disruption due to the ongoing conflict in West Asia, mainly because of flight cancellations, airspace restrictions and travel fears among patients. This comes at a time when hospitals were seeing signs of demand from Bangladesh, one of the key sources of patients for Indian hospitals, and had recently accelerated outreach efforts in West Asia.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/medical-tourism-from-key-west-asia-market-faces-disruptions/article70735642.ece

External

India, Chile agree to boost cooperation in trade, investment, mineral exploration, space

India and Chile have agreed to boost cooperation in trade, investment, health and pharmaceuticals, science and technology and other sectors. Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh visited Chile from March 10-12,and represented the Government of India at the inauguration ceremony of new President of Chile, Jose Antonio Kast Rist, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Thursday.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/india-chile-agree-to-boost-cooperation-in-trade-investment-mineral-exploration-space/article70737787.ece

India's sunflower oil imports halve in February amid West Asia conflict, rising prices

India's crude sunflower oil imports fell 51 per cent to 1,45,000 tonne in February, an industry body said on Thursday, as the ongoing conflict in West Asia and disruptions to Black Sea shipping routes pushed prices sharply higher. The Solvent Extractors' Association of India (SEA) said average import price for crude sunflower oil rose 17 per cent to

USD 1,420 per tonne in February from USD 1,216 a year earlier, while the rupee's 4.2 per cent depreciation over the past year compounded costs for importers and refiners.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/indias-sunflower-oil-imports-halve-in-feb-amid-west-asia-conflict-rising-prices/articleshow/129505305.cms

India begins probe into circumvention of countervailing duty on saccharin imports

India has started a probe on alleged circumvention of countervailing duty imposed on saccharin - used in a range of industries such as food, beverage and pharma - imported from China, according to a notification. The investigation was started by the Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR), under the Commerce Ministry, following a request for the same by Swati Petro Products and Blue Jet Healthcare.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/india-begins-probe-into-circumvention-of-countervailing-duty-on-saccharin-imports/articleshow/129504231.cms

US begins new unfair trade probe against overproduction in India, 15 others

The US has begun a new trade investigation into excess industrial capacity in 16 major trading partners including India under section 301 of its Trade Act which could lead to new tariffs. India has created significant excess capacity in petrochemicals, steel and solar module while its global goods trade surplus sectors include textiles, health, construction goods, and automotive goods, the United States Trade Representative (USTR) said Wednesday, adding that it has requested consultations with the governments of the respective economies. China, the EU, Japan, Switzerland, Mexico and Indonesia are some of the other impacted economies.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/us-begins-new-unfair-trade-probe-against-overproduction-in-india-15-others/articleshow/129490213.cms