

March 16, 2026 – Monday

Economy

Lok Sabha approves additional spending of Rs 2.01 lakh crore for FY 2025-26

The Lok Sabha on Friday approved the second batch of supplementary demands for grants, allowing the government to spend an additional Rs 2.01 lakh crore in the current financial year. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman told the House that despite the extra spending, the fiscal deficit will remain within the Revised Estimates for 2025-26. The government had sought approval to spend a gross additional amount of Rs 2.81 lakh crore. However, with estimated additional receipts of Rs 80,000 crore during the current fiscal year, the net additional cash spending stands at Rs 2.01 lakh crore.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/finance/lok-sabha-approves-additional-spending-of-rs-2-01-lakh-crore-for-fy-2025-26/articleshow/129548728.cms

New labour codes to drive wider adoption of fixed-term employment: Report

Nearly 75 per cent of companies expect a rise in structured fixed-term employment as companies respond to the implementation of new labour codes, signalling a shift towards greater workforce formalisation, according to a report. The shift toward workforce formalisation is becoming increasingly evident, as an overwhelming 75 per cent of respondents anticipate greater adoption of structured fixed-term employment as a strategic response to the new labour codes, HR solutions provider Genius HRTech said in the report.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/new-labour-codes-to-drive-wider-adoption-of-fixed-term-employment-report/articleshow/129587823.cms

Finance

RBI's likely to raise liquidity to keep 'short' rates in check

India's central bank is likely to boost liquidity ahead of the fiscal year end, economists said, as it seeks to restrain short-term rates from spiking and offset the impact of its currency-market interventions that sought to arrest the rupee's precipitous slide since the start of the Iran war. The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) liquidity-enhancing arsenal includes open market operations (OMOs) for bond purchases, or dollar-rupee buy-sell swaps, bankers and economists said.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/rbis-likely-to-raise-liquidity-to-keep-short-rates-in-check/articleshow/129595006.cms

Parliamentary panel recommends I-T dept to set up 'Expert Litigation Committee'

A Parliamentary panel has asked the income tax department to set up an 'Expert Litigation Committee' to vet tax dispute cases before filing appeals at the High Courts or Supreme Court, and called for a "paradigm shift" in the department's approach to litigation. Expressing concern over the I-T department's dismal litigation success rate of a mere 12.07 per cent at the High Court level and 14.50 per cent at the ITAT level in 2024-25, the Standing Committee

on Finance, in a report, said that repeated adverse outcomes point to “systemic weaknesses” rather than isolated legal contests.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/parliamentary-panel-recommends-i-t-dept-to-set-up-expert-litigation-committee/article70746171.ece

Finance Ministry restructured norms for minimum public shareholdings

Finance Ministry has revised norms for public shareholding framework of listed companies. Experts feel such a move aims balance market liquidity with the practical realities of large capital raising. Earlier, there were just three categories of post-issue capital – ₹1,600 crore, ₹1,600 crore to ₹4,000 crore and ₹4,000 crore to ₹1 lakh crore – for defining norms to achieve the 25 per cent minimum public shareholding. There was a special category for post-issue capital size of ₹1 lakh crore and above.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/finance-ministry-restructured-norms-for-minimum-public-shareholdings/article70745790.ece

Industry

CAFE-3 norms: Small cars face steep price hikes as PMO calls meeting to finalise draft proposals

The Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) is set to finalise the draft proposals for the next phase of Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency (CAFE-3) norms. A meeting has been convened to give final touches to the proposals by the Principal Secretary in the PMO, Shaktikanta Das, on Monday. While an inter-ministerial group submitted a nearly finalised draft to PMO Advisor Tarun Kapoor on February 25, sources indicated that a more detailed presentation has been requested for Monday’s meeting.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/national/cafe-3-norms-small-cars-face-steep-price-hikes-as-pmo-calls-meeting-to-finalise-draft-proposals/article70746615.ece

Fintech funding sees modest rise in CY25 as investor outlook turns cautious

Fintechs are likely to face some pain on the funding front over the near future with the West Asia crisis taking a toll. Data for the calendar year (CY) 2025 on fintech funding from Tracxn Technologies — a data intelligence platform for private market research — showed a slight uptick over CY24. A sum of $2.4 billion was raised in CY25, a rise of 2 per cent over CY24, and flat compared to CY23. Seed-stage funding at $177 million in CY25 is a drop of 40 per cent compared to CY24, and lower by 30 per cent over CY23. Early-stage funding of $1.2 billion during this period is a rise of 78 per cent over CY24, and up by 56 per cent over CY23. But late-stage funding at $1 billion in CY25 was lower by 26 per cent over both CY24 and CY23.
https://www.business-standard.com/finance/news/fintech-funding-may-slow-amid-west-asia-crisis-investor-caution-126031300709_1.html

Agriculture

India fast-tracks fertiliser imports to cushion kharif season from West Asia supply shock

India has fast-tracked fertiliser imports to safeguard supplies for the kharif sowing season as the West Asia crisis disrupts gas shipments, and shipping routes, government sources said on Saturday. India has brought forward a global tender for urea imports and ordered 13.5 lakh tonnes of fertiliser by mid-February. About 90 per cent of this order is expected to arrive by the end of March, the sources said.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/agriculture/india-fast-tracks-fertiliser-imports-to-cushion-kharif-season-from-west-asia-supply-shock/articleshow/129577585.cms

Govt asked to explore better substitute for pulses farmers amid complains over lower prices

On a petition seeking import curb on yellow peas due to its adverse impact on domestic production of pulses, the Supreme Court has passed an order directing the government to convene a meeting of different stakeholders to revisit the existing policy framework and explore a better substitute under which the farmers are incentivised for diversification of the conventional crops to pulses, along with certain benefits.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/govt-asked-to-explore-better-substitute-for-pulses-farmers-amid-complains-over-lower-prices/article70746288.ece

Infrastructure

NHAI to raise FASTag annual pass fee by 2.5% for FY27

State-run National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has announced a revision in the fee for the 'FASTag Annual Pass', increasing by 2.5 per cent from ₹3,000 to ₹3,075 for the financial year 2026-27. Accordingly, the revised rate will come into effect from April 1, 2026.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/logistics/nhai-to-raise-fastag-annual-pass-fee-by-25-per-cent-for-fy27/article70747024.ece

Energy

LPG bookings fall to 770k; online bookings rise after govt campaign

LPG refill bookings have declined to about 77 lakh from 88.8 lakh earlier, indicating some easing of panic buying, even as the government said there is no shortage of petrol, diesel or cooking gas, and supplies remain stable despite the West Asia conflict. In a daily update on the impact of the West Asia situation, the government said the share of online LPG bookings has risen to about 87 per cent from 84 per cent, attributing the increase to a campaign by oil marketing companies promoting digital booking and discouraging people from queuing up at LPG dealerships for panic purchases.
https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/lpg-bookings-fall-to-770k-online-bookings-rise-after-govt-campaign-126031500499_1.html

Bangladesh to import 45,000 tonnes of diesel from India

Bangladesh will import an additional 45,000 tons of diesel from India by April, an official said on Sunday. "Recently, 5,000 tons of diesel arrived in Bangladesh from India, and we will receive another 5,000 tons around the 18th or 19th of March in Bangladesh from India", Md. Murshed Hossain Azad, General Manager (Commercial & Operations) of Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) told over the phone.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/bangladesh-to-import-45000-tonnes-of-diesel-from-india/articleshow/129589015.cms

States

Odisha to utilise 3,047 acres UMPP land for Adani coal-to-chemicals complex

In a significant move, the Odisha government has decided to utilise 3,047 acres of land, acquired for an Ultra Mega Power Project (UMPP) in Sundargarh district, for one of India's biggest coal-to-chemicals complexes proposed by Adani Enterprises Ltd (AEL) at an investment of about Rs 84,000 crore. Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo informed the Assembly that 3,046.99 acres of land, comprising 2,731.58 acres of private land and 315.41 acres of government land spread across six villages of Bhedabahal in Sundargarh district, had originally been acquired by the Odisha Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (Idco) for a proposed 4,000-MW UMPP.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/odisha-to-use-3047-acres-umpp-land-for-adani-coal-to-chemicals-project-126031500657_1.html

Amit Shah lays foundation for ₹2,092 crore health projects in Assam

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for health projects worth Rs 2,092 crore in Assam. Shah inaugurated the Rs 675-crore Pragjyotishpur Medical College and Hospital in Guwahati, at a programme held on its premises. He also virtually inaugurated two cancer centres at Golaghat and Tinsukia, both under Assam Cancer Care Foundation (ACCF), constructed at a cost of Rs 135 crore each.
https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/amit-shah-lays-foundation-for-2-092-crore-health-projects-in-assam-126031500206_1.html

Healthcare

Cancer care under Ayushman Bharat needs Rs 33,000 crore annually, far above current allocation: Study

India's flagship health insurance programme, Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, has emerged as a lifeline for cancer patients, offering financial protection and timely access to care that would otherwise be out of reach for most of them, even as a huge gap still exists in annual allocation and requirement, a recently released study said.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/banking/finance/insure/cancer-care-under-ayushman-bharat-needs-rs-33000-crore-annually-far-above-current-allocation-study/articleshow/129589458.cms

West Asia war hits medical tourism: Overseas patient flow to Indian hospitals drops up to 75%

As the US-Israel-Iran war shows no signs of waning, leading Indian hospitals reported a drastic 50% to 75% fall in overseas patient flows in the last two weeks. These top hospitals include Fortis Healthcare, Artemis Hospitals group, Marengo and others. For the current month, Fortis healthcare says the overall revenue impact may be in the range of 15% to 20%, a figure like some other hospitals. Executives feel the market may see further decline if the war continues.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/healthcare/west-asia-war-hits-medical-tourism-overseas-patient-flow-to-indian-hospitals-drops-up-to-75/articleshow/129570965.cms

External

Over Rs 15k cr disbursed to exporters till December 25 this fiscal under duty refund scheme RoDTEP

The government on Friday informed the Rajya Sabha that it has disbursed Rs 15,756.96 crore till December 25 this fiscal under the Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP) scheme. It has benefited more than 1.11 lakh exporters so far this fiscal, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Jitin Prasada said in a written reply to the Rajya Sabha.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/over-rs-15k-cr-disbursed-to-exporters-till-december-25-this-fiscal-under-duty-refund-scheme-rodtep/articleshow/129561780.cms

Industry seeks concessional imports via SEZs

In a move aimed at supporting import substitution and manufacturing in India, industry has suggested that the Centre allow imports from major import partners including China and countries under different trade agreements, to be supplied from special economic zones (SEZ) to the domestic area at concessional duty. In a communication to the commerce and industry ministry, SEZ units and developers suggested that 200 products including photovoltaic cells, naphtha, fungicides, non-industrial diamonds, parts of electric power machinery, certain vaccines and aluminium billets be allowed to be imported at concessional duty.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/industry-seeks-concessional-imports-via-sezs/articleshow/129594870.cms

Planning early shipments, exploring alternate routes amid West Asia crisis: Exporters

Exporters and logistics providers are minimising disruptions caused by the ongoing West Asia crisis by closely monitoring carriers, planning shipments in advance, and exploring alternative routes. The exporting community said that businesses are also adjusting inventory, contracts, and schedules for flexibility.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/planning-early-shipments-exploring-alternate-routes-amid-west-asia-crisis-exporters/articleshow/129586370.cms

India's gems, jewellery exports up 3.86% at $2.68 billion in Feb: GJEPC

India’s gems and jewellery exports grew 3.86 per cent year-on-year to $2.68 billion (₹24,340.05 crore) in February, following the industry’s diversification into other markets, according to the Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC). The overall exports stood at $2.58 billion (₹22,460.13 crore) during the corresponding month of 2025, GJEPC data showed.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/indias-gems-jewellery-exports-up-386-at-268-billion-in-feb-gjepc/article70746061.ece

Global sugar prices slide on Brazil surplus, India outlook stable: ICRA

Global sugar prices have fallen sharply amid surplus supply from Brazil, even as the outlook for the Indian sugar sector remains stable, according to ICRA. International sugar prices in SY2026 have remained lower than the current cost of sugar production and prevailing domestic prices, mainly due to surplus sugar supply from Brazil. Global sugar production for SY2025–SY2026 is estimated at 189.3 million metric tonnes, about 5% higher than the previous year, while consumption is expected at 178.1 million metric tonnes, around 1% higher year-on-year.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/agriculture/global-sugar-prices-slide-on-brazil-surplus-india-outlook-stable-icra/articleshow/129555781.cms