

**Economic  
Division**

# **Monthly Economic Review**

*January 2024*



सत्यमेव जयते

आर्थिक कार्य विभाग  
DEPARTMENT OF  
**ECONOMIC AFFAIRS**

## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	3
Major agencies reaffirm high growth for the Indian economy in FY24.....	5
Footprints of Stabilisation of the Global Economy.....	9
Green energy sector seeks tax incentives and relaxations.....	11
Recovery on the cards for global trade in 2024.....	11
India's external sector on track for recovery.....	12
Retail inflation back on track .....	14
Government interventions yielding better results in food inflation.....	15
Onward march towards fiscal consolidation.....	16
Rising employment opportunities highlight better growth prospects for India.....	18
Female enrolment higher than that of males in higher education.....	22
Progress towards “Quality Healthcare for All” .....	23
Transformation of the Aspirational District Programme .....	25
Outlook.....	26
Performance of High Frequency Indicators.....	28

## Abstract

*Driven by a better-than-expected performance in Q2 of FY24 and above 7 per cent growth projection for FY24 (by MoSPI in its first advance estimates), many global agencies have revised India's growth projection in the upward direction. This reflects the resilience of the Indian economy to sustain its growth path amidst ongoing geopolitical headwinds. The measures announced in the Interim Union Budget FY25 are expected to play a pivotal role in supporting India's growth journey ahead.*

*Increased Government spending on capex announced in the Union Budget has not resulted in a huge jump in its total expenditure. Rather, there has been a reprioritisation in Government spending as reflected in an improvement in the capital outlay to revenue expenditure ratio. Despite rising capex, required expenditures to protect the people from the impact of uncertainties have not been compromised. The Government's inclusive approach to economic growth is highlighted in a slew of initiatives that have been announced for the poor, women, youth, and farmers. Amidst changing spending patterns, the Government's commitment towards fiscal consolidation has not been compromised, as it stands firm to follow the glide path. The Government has lowered its Fiscal Deficit estimate for FY24 to 5.8 per cent of Nominal GDP, compared to the Budget Estimate of 5.9 per cent, and stands committed to lowering it further to 5.1 per cent in FY25.*

*Global slowdown, especially in India's major trading partners, has led to a slowdown in demand for India's merchandise exports. At the same time, there has been a decline in the overall value of imports due to a fall in international commodity prices, which spiked after the outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. This has led to a narrowing of India's merchandise trade deficit in the first ten months of FY24. A narrowing merchandise trade deficit, coupled with rising net services receipts, is expected to result in an improvement in India's current account deficit. As far as capital account is concerned, India's strong macroeconomic fundamentals, high growth and stable business environment have boosted Foreign Portfolio Inflows (FPIs).*

*Inflationary pressures have moderated in January 2024 due to a fall in food as well as core inflation. The recent measures announced by the Government to control food prices, are likely*

*to reduce inflation further. The expectations of the fading away of El Nino and the forecast of a normal monsoon bodes well for a better-than-normal kharif sowing<sup>1</sup>.*

*On the employment front, the urban unemployment rate in Q3 of FY24 declined to 6.5 per cent, the lowest since the start of the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS). Formal sector employment also showed robust growth, as indicated by a steep rise in the subscription base of the Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO). The PMI Manufacturing and services employment sub-indices showcase a broad-based improvement in employment generation.*

*The government's emphasis on inclusive development and enhancement of the welfare of all is reflected in increased spending on social services. Not only has the outlay for key social schemes increased, but there is also a rise in the share of spending on social services in total expenditure. Government initiatives for higher education in the form of financial support and an increase in the number of higher education institutes have incentivised marginalised students to take up higher education. The ascent of India as the fastest-growing major economy is accompanied by an advancing quality healthcare system. Highlighting the efforts of the government towards public investments in the health sector, findings from National Health Accounts (NHA) show that various indicators have demonstrated an encouraging trend on a sustained basis. The Aspirational District Programme has been instrumental in addressing critical gaps and fostering collaboration among diverse stakeholders to target efforts in the pockets of deprivation, thus contributing to nationwide inclusive and sustainable development.*

*Overall, the outlook for the Indian economy appears bright. RBI has forecasted India's real GDP to grow at 7 per cent in FY25, with risks evenly balanced. Prospects of healthy Rabi harvesting, sustained manufacturing profitability and underlying service resilience are expected to support economic activity in FY25. On the demand side, household consumption is expected to improve, while prospects of fixed investment remain bright owing to an upturn in the private capex cycle, improved business sentiments, healthy balance sheets of banks and corporates, and the government's continued thrust on capital expenditure. Improvement in the outlook for global trade and rising integration in the global supply chain will support net external demand. However, headwinds from geopolitical tensions, volatility in international financial markets, and geoeconomic fragmentation need watching.*

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.skymetweather.com/content/weather-news-and-analysis/skymet-weather-forecasts-normal-monsoon-probabilities-for-india-in-2024/>

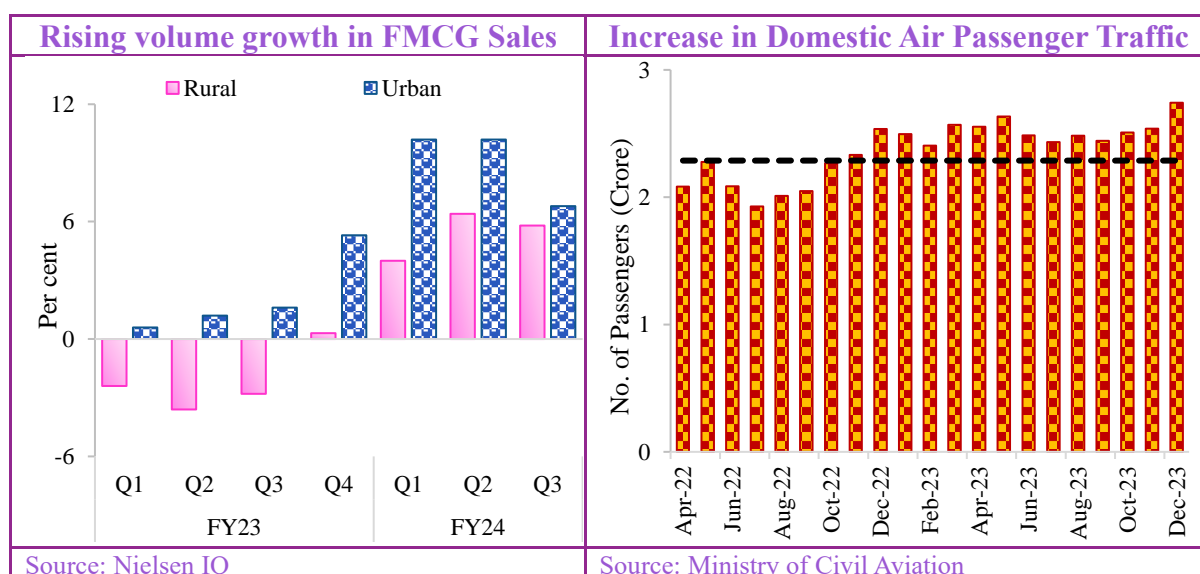
## Major agencies reaffirm high growth for the Indian economy in FY24

1. Many global agencies have revised India's growth projections in FY24 upward from levels that were already higher than those of the major economies. Three successive years of high growth demonstrate the resilience of the Indian economy, built on the reforms of the past decade and reinforced by the testing experience of the pandemic.

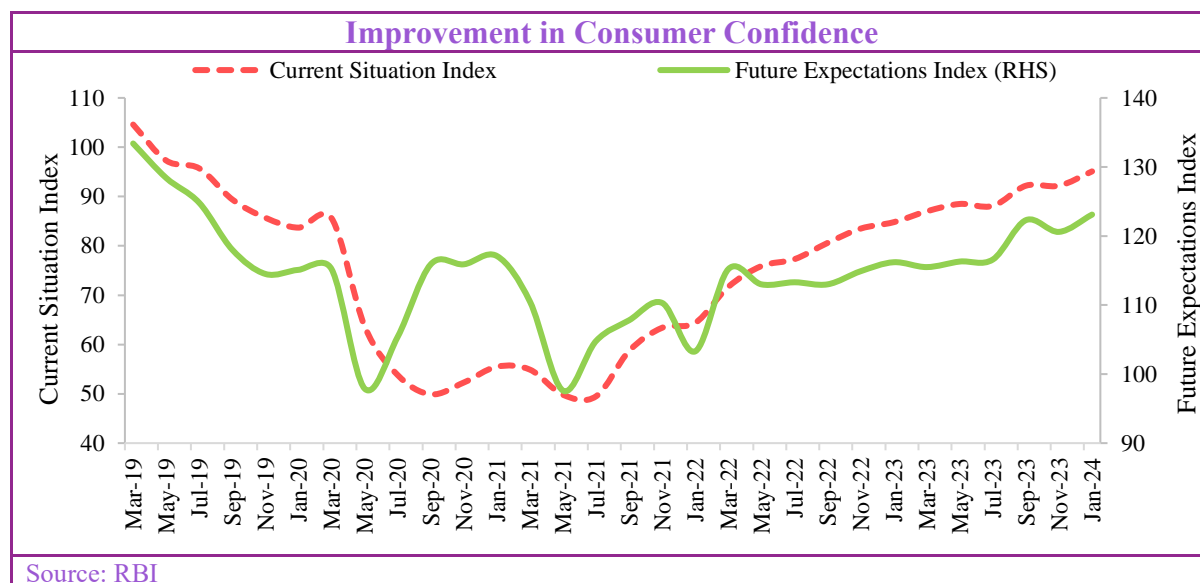
The National Statistics Office has estimated India's real GDP to grow at 7.3 per cent in FY24 in its first advance estimates released in January. The RBI's Survey of Professional Forecasters (SPF) has upgraded India's real GDP growth from 6.4 per cent to 7.0 per cent. The International Monetary Fund (IMF), in its January 2024 World Economic Outlook (WEO), revised India's growth projections to 6.7 per cent from 6.3 per cent in its October 2023 WEO. Further, IMF's medium-term growth forecasts for India remain strong, supported by improving macroeconomic fundamentals and resilient domestic demand. Likewise, major global agencies have also lifted India's growth projections for FY24 on the back of remarkable performance in Q2. As per the IMF estimate, India will become the third-largest economy in 2027 at market exchange rates, with its contribution to global growth increasing by 200 basis points in the next five years.

2. The bedrock of high growth is strong private consumption. Initially driven by the release of post-pandemic pent-up demand, private consumption now reflects buoyant consumer sentiment that is generally associated with reduced economic uncertainty.

A strong Private Final Consumption Expenditure (PFCE) driven by sustained growth in urban demand and recovery in rural demand is supporting India's growth in FY24. Resilient urban demand is reflected in rising passenger vehicle sales, increased spending on credit and debit cards, domestic air passenger traffic comfortably above the pre-pandemic level and increasing housing sales. Several indicators, such as increasing tractor and two-three-wheeler sales and a surge in volume growth of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), point towards improvement in rural demand. According to the data released by Nielsen IQ, volume sales of FMCG in rural markets increased by 5.8 per cent in Q3 of FY24 on a year-on-year basis. Increasing minimum support prices and prospects of healthy rabi harvesting will further strengthen rural demand.



RBI's forward-looking survey on consumer confidence signals strong consumer sentiments underpinned by improvement in the assessment of the current general economic and employment condition. The general economic outlook and prospects for employment, income and spending are expected to improve further over the next year. Budget announcements focusing on creating post-harvest infrastructure, achieving self-reliance in oilseeds and dairy development, promoting fishing and aquaculture, and creating an additional 10 million Lakhpati Didis are all expected to contribute to a sustained recovery in rural demand. Near-term, prospects for the Rabi crop and the fading of the El Nino oscillation will make a significant difference to rural demand.



3. Investment is consolidating in the economy as high public capex crowds in private investment, which is beginning to set up additional plants and acquiring new machinery to address rising capacity utilisation.

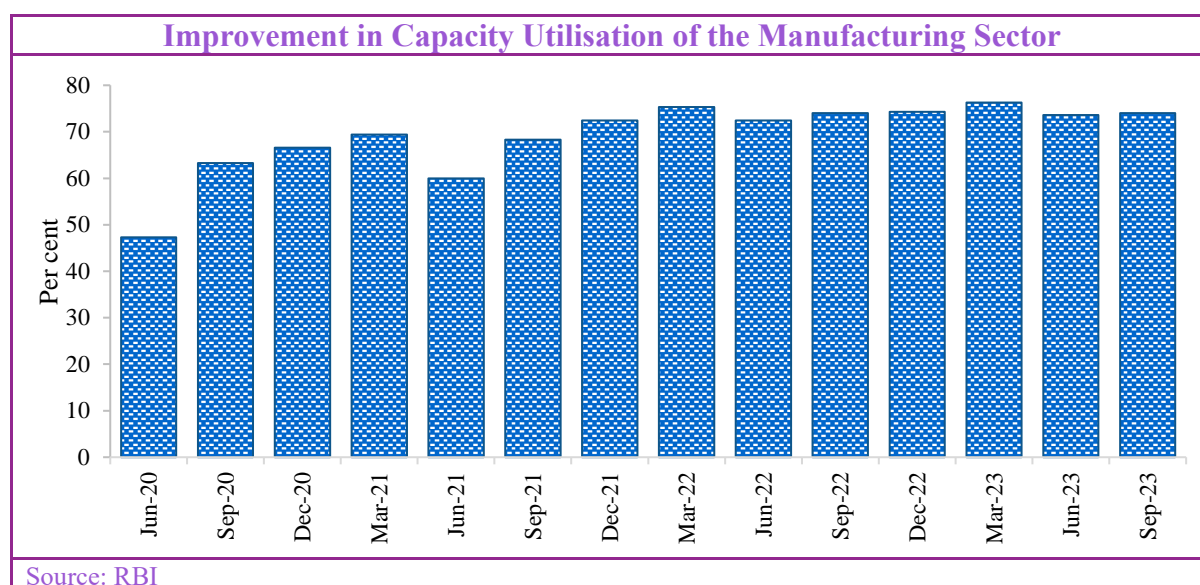
Supplementing rising consumption is the robust growth in investment (Gross Fixed Capital Formation) backed by the large capital expenditure of the government. The government's increasing emphasis on capital formation is expected to boost infrastructure. In its commentary on the Interim Union Budget, Fitch Ratings mentioned that the Government's continued capex emphasis would not only support the growth outlook for FY25 but also reduce infrastructure bottlenecks and improve medium-term growth potential<sup>2</sup>. The Government's focus on capital expenditure has helped steer the country through the early stages of an investment upcycle. Cleaner and deleveraged corporate balance sheets enabling fresh private investments also contribute to a stronger GFCF. Going ahead, this is expected to go up as capacity utilisation further increases.

The RBI's latest survey in FY24 indicates capacity utilisation in the manufacturing sector increasing to 74 per cent in Q2 of FY24 from 73.6 per cent in the previous quarter. Proxy indicators of investment,

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.fitchratings.com/research/sovereigns/indias-interim-budget-reinforces-commitment-to-gradual-fiscal-consolidation-05-02-2024>



such as the capital goods index of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) and capital goods imports, are growing at healthy rates.



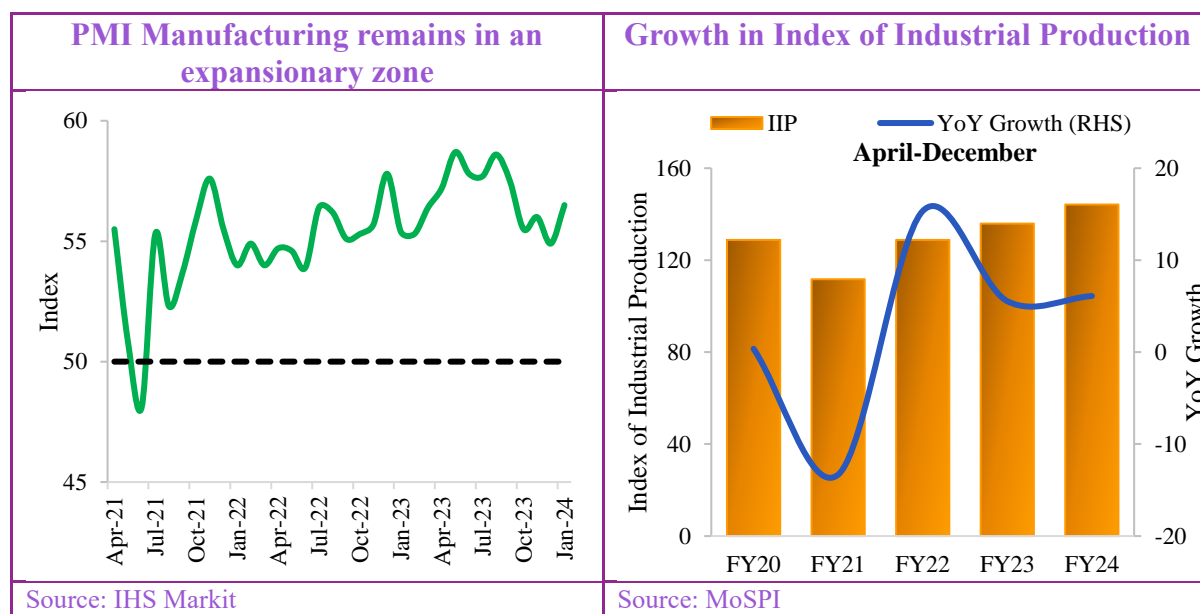
4. The supply response to strong consumption and investment demand is comparable and broadbased. Agriculture is increasingly ensuring food security. Manufacturing has shown irreversible progress over almost a year and a half. And spending on infrastructure and real estate is showing up in the resurgence of the construction sector.

Rabi sowing has shown healthy progress in the current year, contributing to the expectations of robust Rabi output. As of 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2024, the area sown under rabi crops was slightly higher than that in the corresponding period of the previous year. High reservoir levels, adequate availability of fertiliser and seeds, and growing tractor sales support improvements in sowing acreage and output outturns. Rapid progress in the procurement of wheat and rice has ensured a continuous increase in food buffers. As of January 2024, total foodgrain stocks with FCI are 3.2 times the buffer norm requirement for the January-March period. This has addressed the country's food security requirements in the last quarter of the financial year. A high buffer stock would aid in curbing inflationary pressures caused by uneven rainfall distribution in the country, besides strengthening food security.

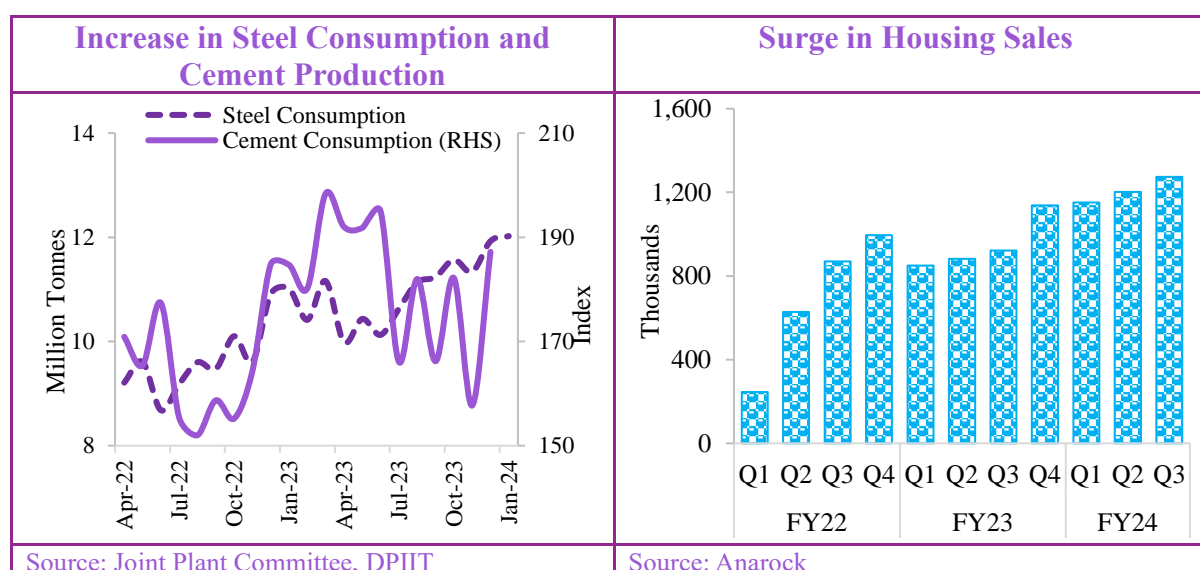
The Interim Union Budget FY25 has significantly emphasised the farming sector. Measures for strengthening the electronic agricultural mandi network, the focus on promoting public and private investment in post-harvest infrastructure, as well as efforts for increased value addition under the existing PM Kisan Sampada Yojana and PM Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises scheme are expected to generate beneficial outcomes for farmers. In addition, the announcement of the expansion of nano-DAP across all climatic zones points to the promotion of new-age fertilisers to ease the burden on farmers. The increased allocation for the Production-Linked Incentive scheme for the food processing industry indicates a focus on encouraging innovation in this sector.

5. The robust performance of the manufacturing sector is evident in India's manufacturing Purchasing Manager Index (PMI), which has remained in the expansionary zone for the past 31 months. Similarly, the growth of the Index of Industrial Production and Index of Core

Industries offers fresh evidence of sustained growth in manufacturing activity. Increased allocation for the Production Linked Incentive Scheme (PLI) in the Interim Union Budget FY25 is expected to boost the manufacturing sector further by encouraging domestic production.



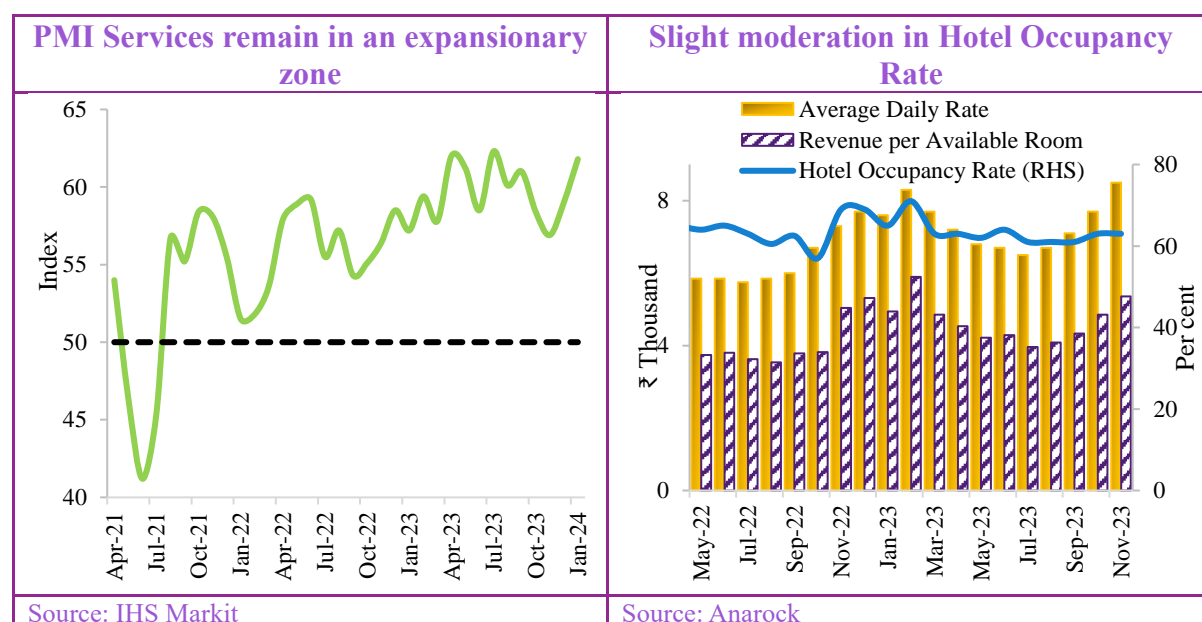
6. Footprints of robust construction activity are visible in rising cement production and increased steel consumption, triggered by increased government spending on infrastructure and rising household demand for real estate. Despite increasing home prices and higher interest rates on home loans, housing sales and launches were higher in Q3 of FY24, accompanied by a decline in inventory overhang. The extension of the PM Awas Yojana (Gramin) in the Interim Union Budget to build 2 crore more houses in the next five years is expected to boost the construction sector further, which has the highest economic multiplier effect on consumption and jobs. The proposal to launch a housing scheme for the middle class to encourage them to buy or build their own houses will also boost construction activity.





7. The services sector has been moving from strength to strength in response to strong private consumption. Tourism is a key services-sub sector and has been on a rising trajectory ever since the ebbing of the pandemic.

The rising Services PMI indicates the robust performance of the services sector, which has been in an expanding zone for the last 30 months, spurred by demand buoyancy, productivity gains and rising intake of new work. Overall sentiment in the services sector remains upbeat, driven, among others, by an upswing in the tourism cum hotel industry induced by leisure travel, business travel, and social events. Tourism, in fact, has been vital to strengthening contact-intensive activity with positive spillovers in the hotel industry and the broader hospitality sector. Foreign tourists arriving in India are rising and are expected to surpass pre-pandemic levels. Though the Hotel Occupancy Rate is declining, there has been a consistent rise in the average daily rate<sup>3</sup> and revenue per available room<sup>4</sup>. Multiple budget proposals related to tourism, infrastructure, ports, construction, and technology, such as encouraging States to take up comprehensive development of iconic tourist centres and provision of long-term interest-free loans to States for financing development, are expected to create employment opportunities in these sectors.



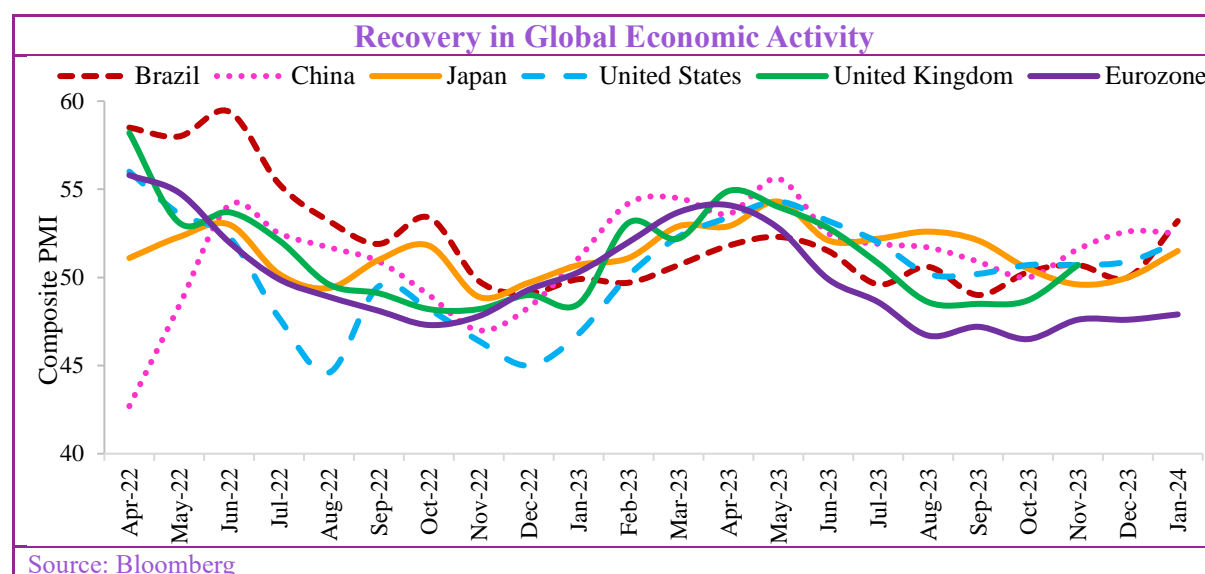
## Footprints of Stabilisation of the Global Economy

8. After a year marked by global uncertainties and volatilities, the global macroeconomic scenario appears to have stabilised in 2023. While uncertainty stemming from adverse geopolitical developments remains elevated, inflationary pressures show signs of decline. Consumer price inflation in most Advanced Economies (AEs) has moderated significantly. Banking sector risks also appear subdued, and fears of a recession in most AEs are gradually

<sup>3</sup> The average daily rate is calculated by taking the average revenue earned from rooms and dividing it by the number of rooms sold.

<sup>4</sup> RevPAR is calculated by multiplying a hotel's average daily room rate by its occupancy rate. RevPAR is also calculated by dividing total room revenue by the total number of rooms available in the period being measured.

fading. Global growth appears to have further picked pace with global composite PMI in the expansionary zone since February 2023.



9. Market expectations of future policy rates have risen in response to declining inflationary pressures and major central banks' signalling of rate cuts beginning in early 2024. In response, equity markets have risen, and bond yields have declined. However, the policy interventions in 2022-23 globally to counter the commodity price escalation arising in the wake of geopolitical developments, as well as the fiscal expansionary measures taken during the COVID-19 pandemic, constitute a legacy that will take some time to fade from the global economic and financial landscape. To that extent, financial markets might have over-anticipated rate cuts from central banks in advanced economies.

10. Owing to these developments, the IMF, in its latest World Economic Outlook (WEO), has projected global growth at 3.1 per cent in 2024 and 3.2 per cent in 2025. The revised growth projection for 2024 is 0.2 percentage points higher than that in the October 2023 WEO on account of greater-than-expected resilience in the United States and several large emerging markets and developing economies, as well as fiscal support in China.

11. With the likelihood of a hard landing receding as adverse supply shocks unwind, risks to the global outlook are broadly balanced. The global economic recovery is likely to be supported by faster-than-expected disinflation, faster economic recovery in China and implementation of structural reforms by various economies. However, downside risks to global growth persist. Continued attacks in the Red Sea and the ongoing war in Ukraine could generate fresh adverse supply shocks to the global recovery, with spikes in food, energy, and transportation costs. Further, a slower-than-expected decline in core inflation in major economies due to persistent labour market tightness and renewed tensions in supply chains could trigger a revision in expectations of rate cuts. For instance, expectations of a rate cut in the United States in March have been priced out of futures contracts now. Further, to several

observers, the price action in US stocks is indicative of peak frenzy. Such developments could increase financial stability risks, tighten global financial conditions, trigger flight-to-safety capital flows, and strengthen the US dollar, with adverse consequences for trade and growth.

## **Initiatives to boost green energy sector**

12. Taking forward the theme of green energy to consumers, the Interim Budget announced a rooftop solarisation scheme, under which one crore households can obtain up to 300 units of free electricity every month. The budget's proposals include - (i) Voluntary gap funding (VGF) for harnessing offshore wind energy potential projects, (ii) Proposal for setting up of coal gasification and liquefaction capacity of 100 MT by 2030, (iii) Mandatory blending of compressed biogas (CBG) in compressed natural gas (CNG) for transport and piped natural gas (PNG) for domestic purposes and; (iv) Provision of financial assistance for procurement of biomass aggregation machinery, reinforce the government's attempt to accelerate the transition towards clean energy sources.

13. Besides, a new scheme for bio-manufacture and bio-foundry has been proposed, which will provide environment-friendly alternatives such as biodegradable polymers, bio-plastics, bio-pharmaceuticals and bio-agri-inputs. The scheme will also help transform today's consumptive manufacturing paradigm into one based on regenerative principles. The launch of bio-manufacturing and bio-foundry schemes, along with financial assistance for biomass aggregation machinery, reflects the government's holistic approach towards promoting green growth and supporting the 'Waste to Wealth' mission.

14. To expand the electric vehicle (EV) ecosystem, the government has proposed greater adoption of e-buses for public transport networks, which will be encouraged through a payment security mechanism. Setting up a payment security mechanism and emphasis on increasing support for the manufacture of charging infrastructure are steps in the right direction for improving the adoption of e-buses for public transport networks. CRISIL Ratings expects penetration of electric buses to double to around 8 per cent by FY25, from around 4 per cent in FY23<sup>5</sup>.

## **Recovery on the cards for global trade in 2024**

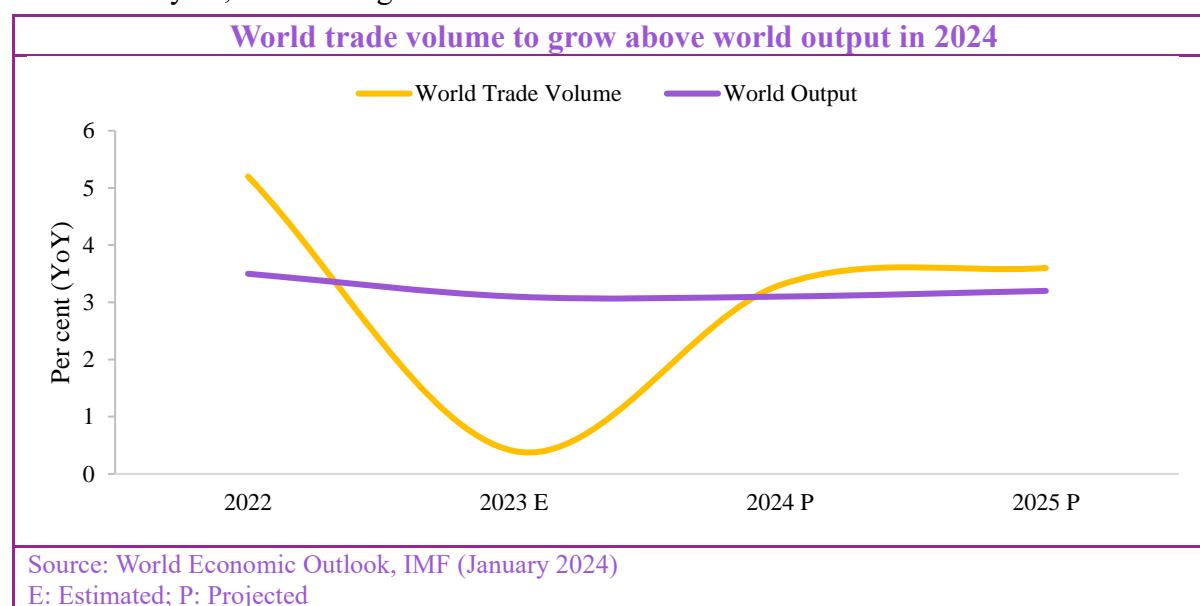
15. The year 2023 was marked by slower growth in world trade volumes in comparison to 2022 for both advanced and emerging markets and developing economies. As per the projections by the IMF, the year 2024 is expected to result in higher year-on-year growth in world trade, with trade volume growth outpacing the growth in world output.<sup>6</sup> Despite the projected global output growth remaining constant for 2024, trade volumes are expected to

---

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.crisilratings.com/en/home/newsroom/press-releases/2023/12/penetration-of-electric-buses-set-to-double-next-fiscal.html>

<sup>6</sup> World Economic Outlook (January 2024)

recover this year, maintaining the momentum in 2025.



## India's external sector on track for recovery

16. Moderation in India's merchandise export growth in FY24 (up to January 2024) following a slowdown in global demand accompanied by a sharper decline in India's merchandise import growth, owing to declining commodity prices, effectively resulted in improvements in the trade balance. Going forward, the RBI's Industrial Outlook Survey of the Manufacturing Sector for Q3FY24<sup>7</sup> report optimistic expectations for both exports and imports during Q4:FY24. Another survey of Professional Forecasters on Macroeconomic Indicators—Results of the 86<sup>th</sup> Round published by the RBI project "India's merchandise exports and imports to grow by 3.6 per cent and 5.2 per cent respectively during 2024-25". As a result, the current account deficit (CAD) is expected to be at 1.4 per cent of the GDP during the year, a marginal increase from the expected 1.3 per cent during FY24.<sup>8</sup>

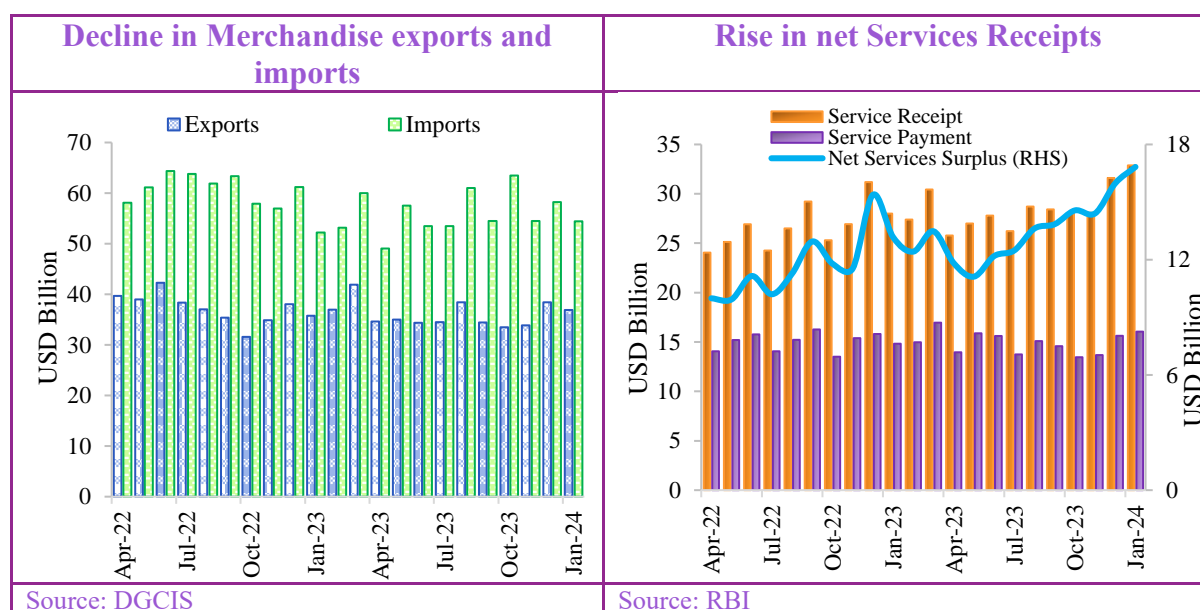
During the first ten months of FY24, merchandise exports and imports contracted by 4.9 per cent and 6.7 per cent, respectively, leading to a narrowing of the merchandise trade deficit from USD 229.4 billion from April 22-January 23 to USD 207.2 billion in April 23-January 24. Classification across major commodity groups showcases that exports have declined broad-based across all categories, except electronic goods. The net service trade during April 23-January 24 rose by 16.5 per cent. Accordingly, India's overall trade deficit (Merchandise and Services combined) declined from USD 112 billion during the first ten months of FY23 to USD 70.4 billion in the corresponding period of FY24.

Efforts on the trade facilitation front have started giving results in terms of declining import release time in 2023 by 47 per cent to 71 hours at Inland Container Depots, by 28 per cent to 44 hours at air cargo complexes and by 27 per cent to 85 hours at seaports, since 2019. The RBI Bulletin (January

<sup>7</sup><https://rbidocs.rbi.org.in/rdocs/Publications/PDFs/IOSQ3202324EAF6D424D5DD4C5897065F2BC9788FD0.PDF>

<sup>8</sup><https://rbidocs.rbi.org.in/rdocs/Publications/PDFs/IOSQ3202324EAF6D424D5DD4C5897065F2BC9788FD0.PDF>

2024) states that brighter prospects for setting up of global capability centres (GCCs) and surging data centre capacity can spur service exports from India in the coming year.



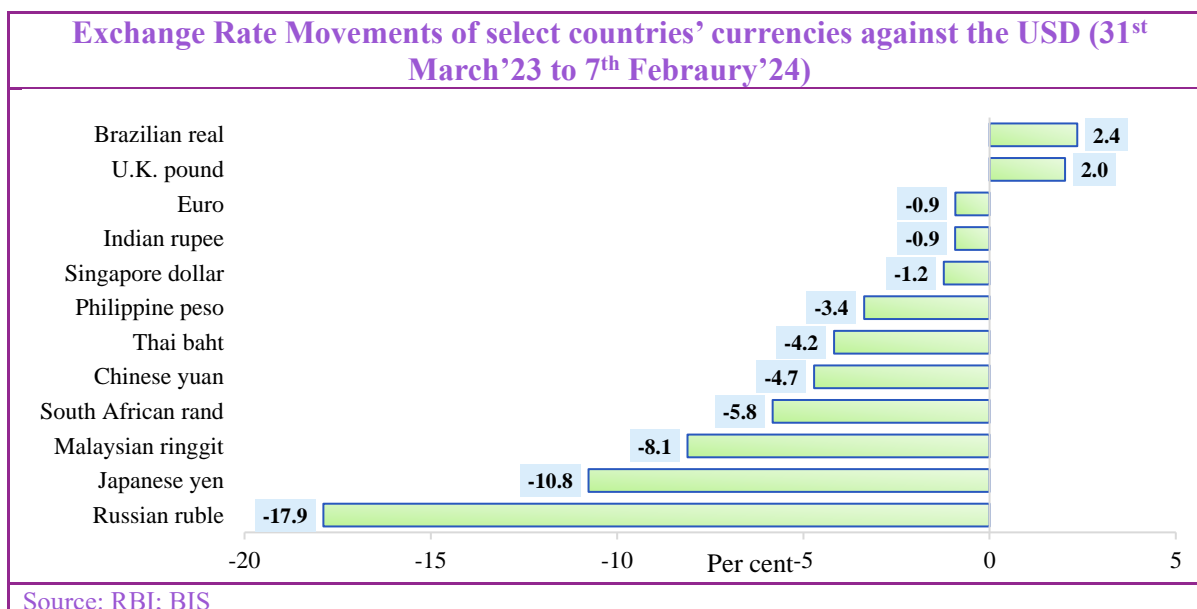
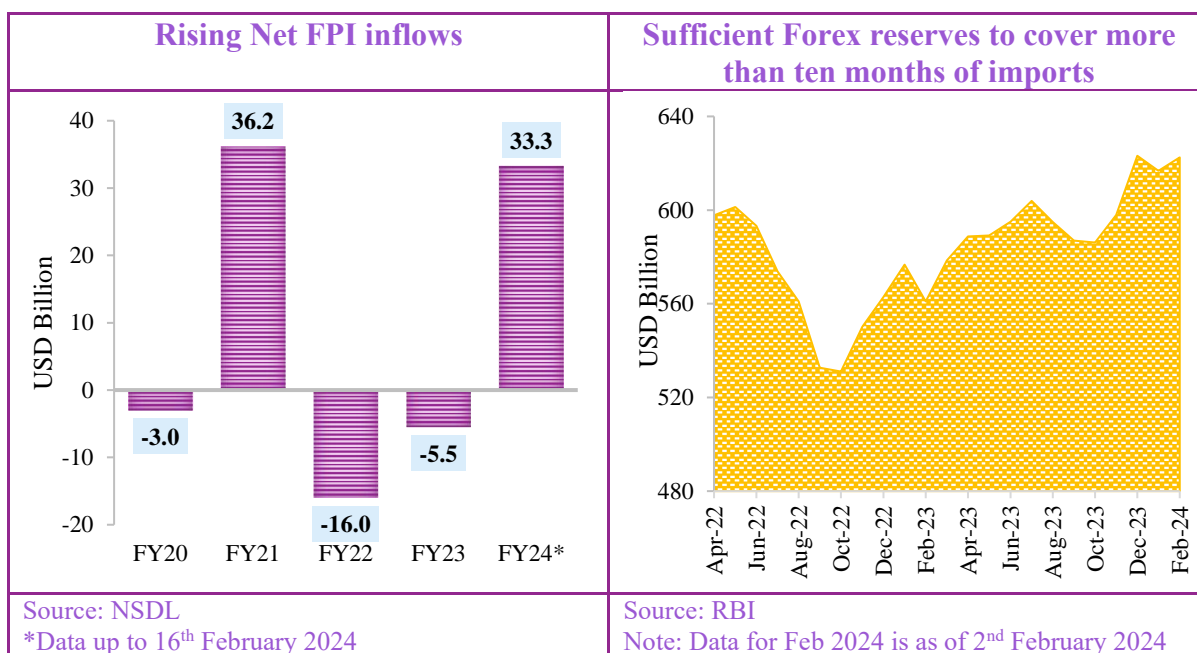
As far as the status of foreign direct investment (FDI) into India is concerned, repatriations, along with global FDI trends, have been the guiding factor during FY24. As per the latest available data from the RBI, direct investments to India moderated by 26.5 per cent during April-November 2023, owing to a sharp growth in repatriations by 28.7 per cent during the period. Monthly data on FDI shows that the gross inflows improved by 12.3 per cent while direct investments (net of repatriation) rose by 134.7 per cent in November 2023, as compared to November 2022.

Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPI) became net buyers in Indian markets during FY24 (up to 16<sup>th</sup> February 2024), compared to their net selling in FY22 and FY23. FPI inflows during FY24 (April 23- February 24) stood at USD 33.3 billion, compared to an outflow of USD (-)5.5 billion the previous year. Rising economic growth, strong macroeconomic fundamentals, positive business sentiments and low volatility in the Indian rupee have played a pivotal role in boosting India's portfolio inflows. However, one must note here that FPI have been net sellers of Indian equities so far in 2024.

The ₹, which stood at 82.98 per USD as of 7 February 2024, depreciated by 0.7 per cent between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 7<sup>th</sup> February 2024 as compared to a depreciation of 8.6 per cent in the corresponding period of the previous year. The exchange rate trends of various currencies against the US dollar since March 2023 reveal that the Indian rupee has emerged as one of the strongest-performing currencies compared to others during FY24 (up to February 2024). As of 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2024, India's foreign exchange reserves stood at USD 622.5 billion, sufficient to cover 11 months of imports projected for 2023-24 and 97 per cent of total external debt outstanding at the end of September 2023.

According to the World Bank, India will remain the largest recipient of remittances globally, with an estimated USD 135 billion in inward remittances in 2024, rising by 8 per cent. India's share in global inward remittances is around 15 per cent.<sup>9</sup>

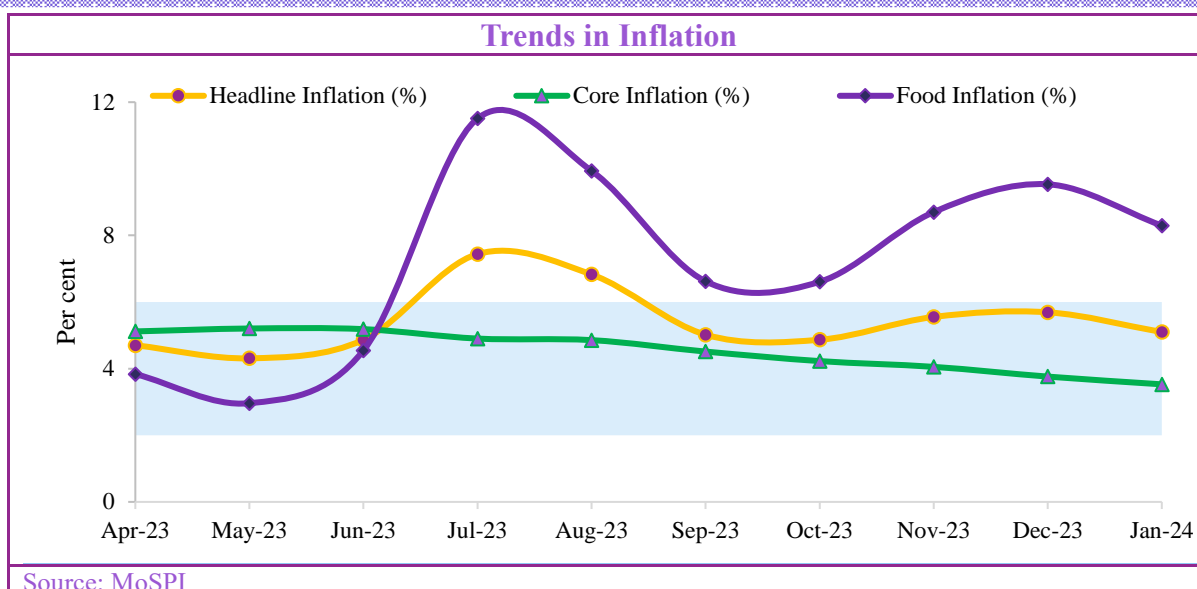
<sup>9</sup> [https://www.rbi.org.in/Scripts/BS\\_PressReleaseDisplay.aspx?prid=57277#F43](https://www.rbi.org.in/Scripts/BS_PressReleaseDisplay.aspx?prid=57277#F43)



## Retail inflation within the target band

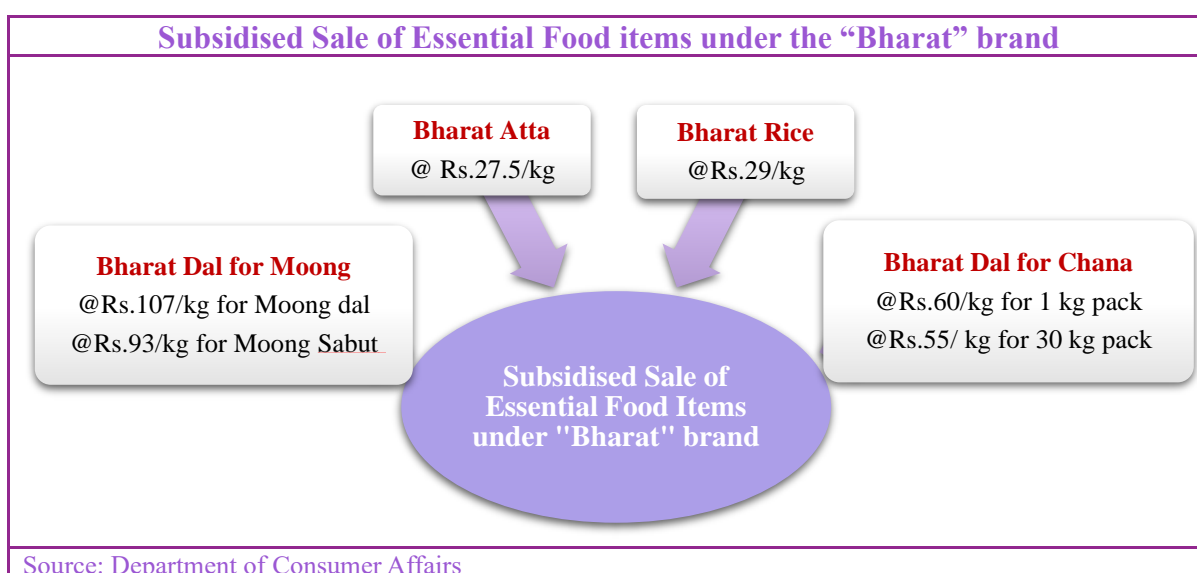
17. Retail inflation declined to a three-month low of 5.1 per cent in January 2024. The fall in inflation in January 2024 is due to both the food and core (non-food, non-fuel) components. Core inflation continued to decline for the eighth consecutive month, from 5.2 per cent in May 2023 to 3.5 per cent in January 2024. Food inflation declined compared to the previous two months, but has still to come down further. Most food items saw a decline in inflation in January 2024. Overall, inflationary pressures moderated in the first 10 months of FY24, with retail inflation easing to 5.4 per cent, compared to 6.8 per cent in the same period of FY23.





### Government interventions yielding better results in food inflation

18. Among essential food items, cereal inflation declined to 7.8 per cent in January 2024. Wheat played a major role, with inflation declining to 2.3 per cent in January 2024. The Bharat Atta initiative, providing Atta at subsidised prices, and open market operations played a considerable role in containing wheat inflation. When the recently launched Bharat Rice initiative gains momentum, rice inflation too is likely to relent gradually. The Government has also issued an order to declare stock position of rice/paddy of major market players.

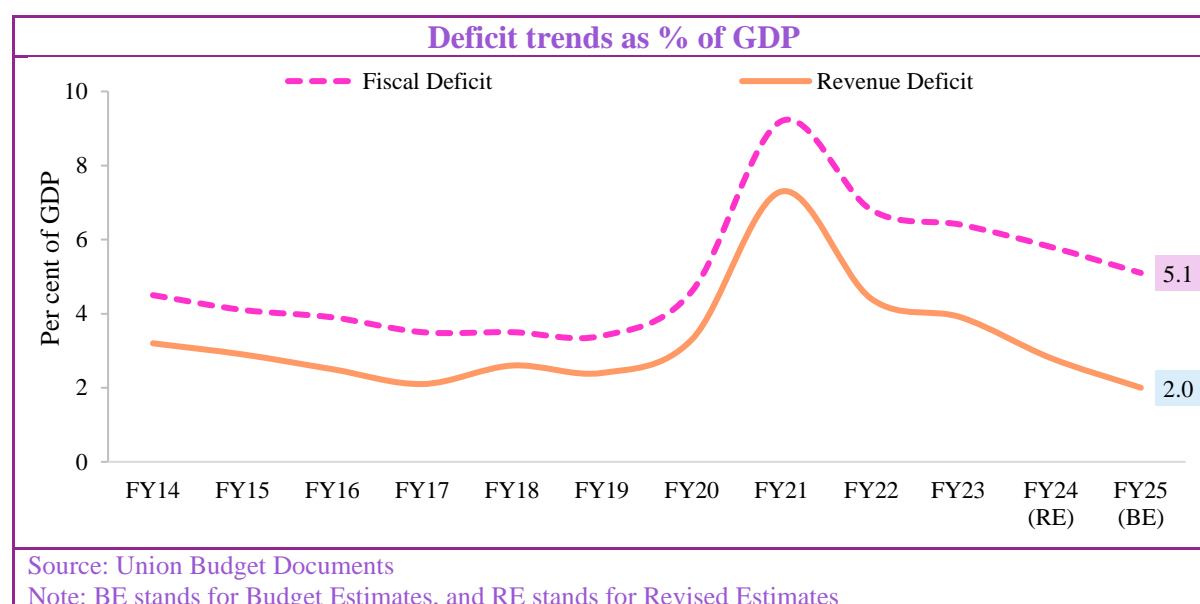


19. Inflation in milk declined to 4.6 per cent in January 2024, the lowest in the last 23 months, indicating that the cost-push inflation cycle of milk is getting over. Benign price trends in edible oils remained a comfort factor in January too. Inflation in spices is gradually falling from its peak in August 2023. Inflation in pulses eased in January, but still high. The

Government has made multi-frontal efforts to rein in the prices of pulses. This included the retail distribution of chana dal at subsidised prices under the Bharat Dal initiative. The Bharat Dal has also been extended to include moong dal. Pulses like tur, urad and masur have been imported to improve domestic availability. To check the volatility in prices of onion, the Government has progressively increased its buffer size and released sizeable quantities through retail sales, e-Nam auction and bulk sales.

## Onward march towards fiscal consolidation

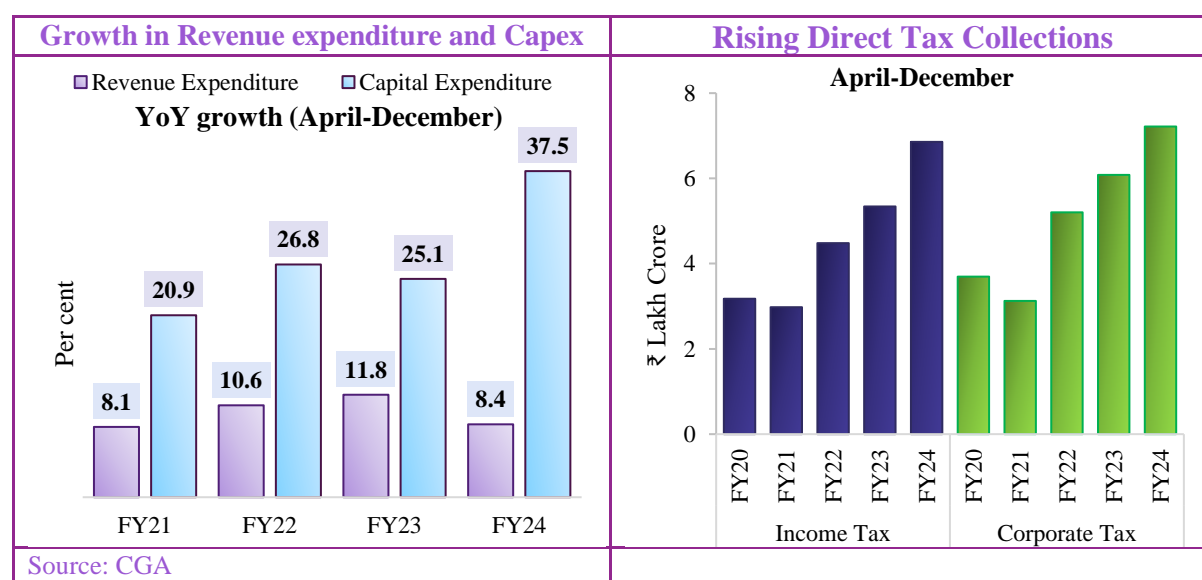
20. The Interim Union Budget FY25 has positioned the government on the path of fiscal consolidation. This is yet another statement on the judicious use of fiscal policy following a calibrated fiscal expansion in FY21, which addressed the pandemic-induced challenges. With the fiscal deficit dropping by 70-80 basis points of GDP, the Interim Union Budget FY25 is fortifying the macroeconomic stability of the country.



The fiscal deficit for FY25 has been budgeted at 5.1 per cent of the GDP, brought down from 5.8 per cent in FY24 (RE). This reduction is driven by the reprioritisation of expenditure and robust revenue collection. The budget has also indicated the government's intention to reduce the fiscal deficit to 4.5 per cent of the GDP by FY26. This will enhance India's credibility in fiscal management and improve global investor confidence in the Indian economy.

21. Lending credence to the fiscal deficit target of FY25 is the disciplined trajectory of the fiscal deficit path during FY24. Buoyant revenues and slowing expenditures have kept the fiscal deficit path closer to its budgeted path. Slowing expenditure has resulted from a moderation in the growth of revenue expenditure. The capex plan remains intact and has been budgeted to grow at a steep rate.

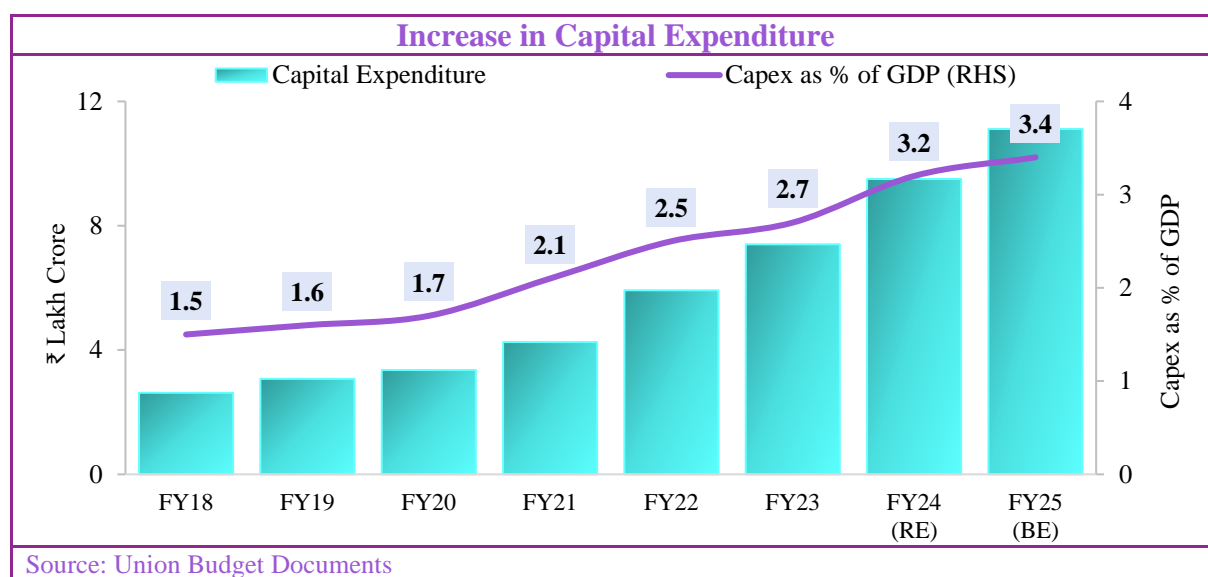
During April-December 2023, the fiscal deficit of the central government stood at 55 per cent of the budget estimates (BE), lower than 59.8 per cent of BE during the corresponding period of the previous year. This improvement is on the back of higher-than-budgeted growth in tax collections and improvement in quality of spending in the first three quarters of the year. Buoyant tax revenues have helped the government accommodate higher expenditure amid supply-side volatilities. Direct tax collections grew by 23.2 per cent (YoY) in April-December 2023, with income tax and corporate tax collections rising by 28.4 per cent and 18.7 per cent, respectively, reflecting increased compliance, higher advance tax collections and widening of the tax base. Indirect tax collections grew by 4.2 per cent (YoY), with GST collections to the Centre recording a growth of 9.2 per cent. Overall, gross tax revenue grew 14.4 per cent over a year ago. Non-tax revenue collection recorded a YoY growth of 45.8 per cent during April-December 2023 on the back of higher-than-budgeted surplus transfers from the RBI. Capital spending increased by 37.5 per cent YoY in the period April-December 2023 compared to 25.1 per cent in the corresponding period of the previous year. On the back of similar increases in the past, the ratio of revenue expenditure to capital outlay fell from 8.6 in FY21 to 4.1 in FY24 (April-December). This resulted in a marked improvement in the quality of spending by the government.



22. In between a calibrated fiscal expansion of FY21 and a decisive fiscal consolidation planned for FY25, the government has demonstrated its continuing commitment to capital expenditure, using it as an effective tool to stimulate growth. The high multiplier effect of capital spending helps spur investment-led growth, as it creates more jobs, increases spending, and induces further growth.

The capex budget allocation has risen from ₹ 4.1 lakh crore in FY21 to ₹ 11.1 lakh crore in FY25, almost three times. The concerted focus on capex-led growth is expected to aid economic growth in the upcoming years. A large budget allocation in the infrastructure sector is likely to crowd in private-sector partnerships in infrastructure development. The substantial increase in budget allocation for infrastructure sectors includes roadways, shipping, and railways. These will improve logistics efficiency and reduce costs in the economy. By November 2023, the Union government disbursed more than ₹59,000 crore out ₹1.3 lakh crore allocated for FY24. The central public sector enterprises (CPSEs) and

other government agencies have invested ₹5.5 lakh crore from April 2023 to December 2023 against their targeted capital expenditure of ₹7.3 lakh crore for FY24.



23. The budget's tax policy also stimulates the economy by extending exemptions and withdrawing disputed tax demands, with any possible revenue loss more than offset by high expected revenue buoyancy.

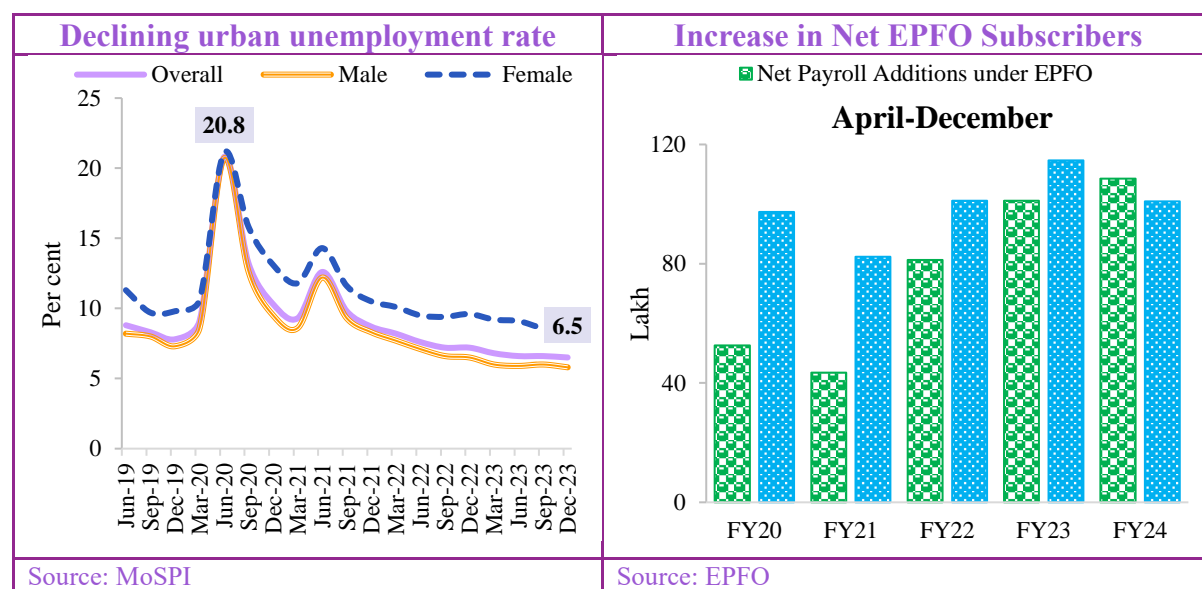
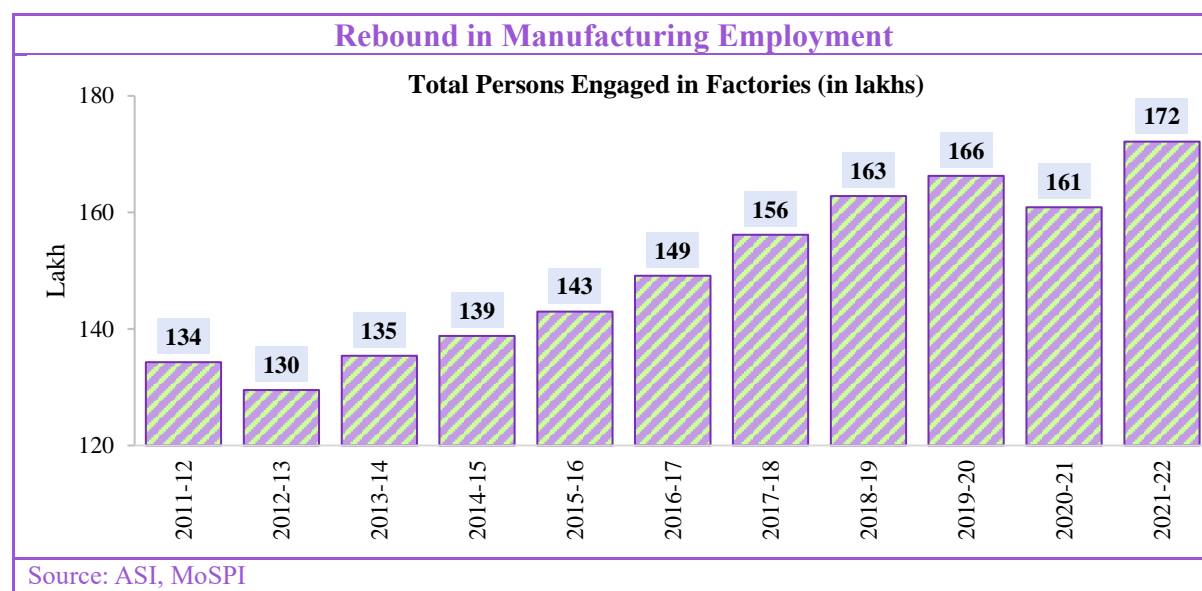
While there are no changes in the rates of direct and indirect taxes, the Interim Budget has extended certain tax exemptions, which were expiring in March 2024, by another year. These include exemptions to transactions done through stock exchanges in the International Financial Services Centre and income and capital gains tax exemptions for sovereign wealth funds for investments in infrastructure projects. The budget also proposes to withdraw some decades-old tax disputes (outstanding direct tax demands up to ₹25,000 till FY10, and up to ₹10,000 during FY11-FY15 will be withdrawn), which are expected to provide relief to 1 crore taxpayers.

## Rising employment opportunities highlight better growth prospects for India

24. The recent quarterly Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) reflects a decline in the urban unemployment rate in Q3 of FY24 compared to the corresponding period of the previous year, tilting growth towards inclusivity. Urban unemployment rate declined from 7.2 per cent in Q3 of FY23 to 6.5 per cent in Q3 of FY24. The fall in the unemployment rate has been accompanied with a rise in the labour force participation rate (LFPR) and Worker to Population ratio (WPR). During the same time period, the LFPR increased from 37.9 per cent to 39.2 per cent, and the WPR increased from 35.2 per cent to 36.7 per cent.

25. The Annual Survey of Industries results for 2021-22 exhibit the resilience shown by the Indian manufacturing sector and tells the turnaround story of the Indian manufacturing sector after the adverse effect of the pandemic witnessed in 2020-21 in terms of output and input contraction and also a marginal fall in employment. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a marginal fall in employment in 2020-21, which was more than compensated in the

subsequent year, i.e. in 2021-22, with total estimated employment in the sector showing a robust YoY growth of 7 per cent. In fact, the estimated number of persons engaged in this sector in 2021-22 has exceeded the pre-pandemic level (2018-19) by more than 9.4 lakhs. At the same time, average emoluments also registered an increase, with the average salary earned per employee rising by 1.7 per cent in 2020-21 and by 8.3 per cent in 2021-22 in comparison to previous years.

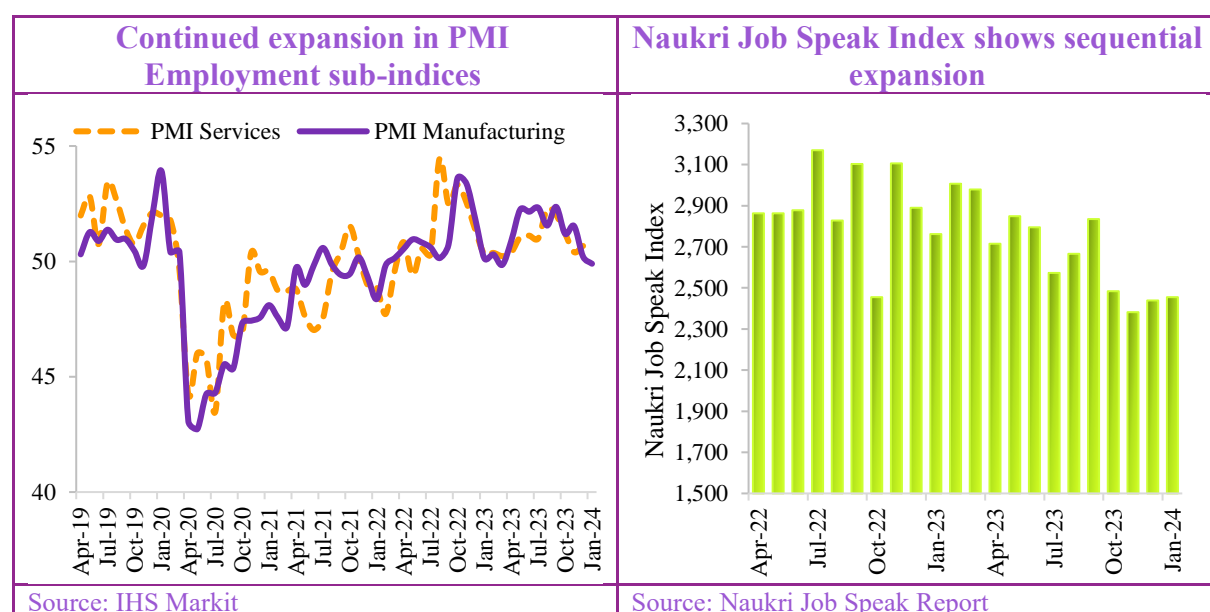


26. High-frequency indicators further reflect an improvement in the overall employment situation across sectors. India's labour market is showing robust growth in formal sector jobs, as indicated by a steep rise in the subscription base of the Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) in the first ten months of FY24. Expansion in the EPFO subscription base has been accompanied by falling exits from the EPFO net. Net payroll addition under EPFO during April-December 2023 was 7.4 per cent higher compared to the corresponding period of the previous year, and exit from the EPFO net during the same time period was 11.9 per cent lower.

27. The creation of digital identities like Aadhar, registration of unorganised workers on the e-ashram portal, and registration of MSMEs on the Udyam portal have played a significant role in promoting the formalisation of the economy. MSMEs registration on UDYAM Portal has increased from 65 lakh in January 2021 to 2.3 crore as of 9th February 2024, three times increase over this period.

28. At a broader level of the manufacturing and services sector as well, rising job creation is evident. The PMI Manufacturing employment sub-index suggests the generation of more employment opportunities in the manufacturing sector supported by an increase in export orders, rising domestic production and expansion in international sales. Similarly, the PMI Services sub-index shows a step up in employment generation in the services sector from a combination of expanding business activity, buoyant demand from domestic and international clients and a rise in export sales.

29. Measures undertaken by the Government have played a pivotal role in boosting employment generation in the MSME sector. Revision in the definition of MSMEs has provided ease in doing business and promoted investment and employment. The launch of the Emergency Credit Link Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) has eased liquidity problems of MSMEs, leading to a reduction in their Non-Performing Assets (NPAs). The Government e-marketplace (GeM) has aided increased market access to Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs), thereby providing inclusive access to local MSEs. The total number of persons employed in MSMEs Registered Under the Udyam Registration Portal was 2.8 crore in July 2020, and it stood at 15.3 crore as of 9th February 2024, 5.3 times increase<sup>1011</sup>, as the number of MSMEs registered in the Udyam portal rises steadily.



<sup>10</sup> <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1946375>

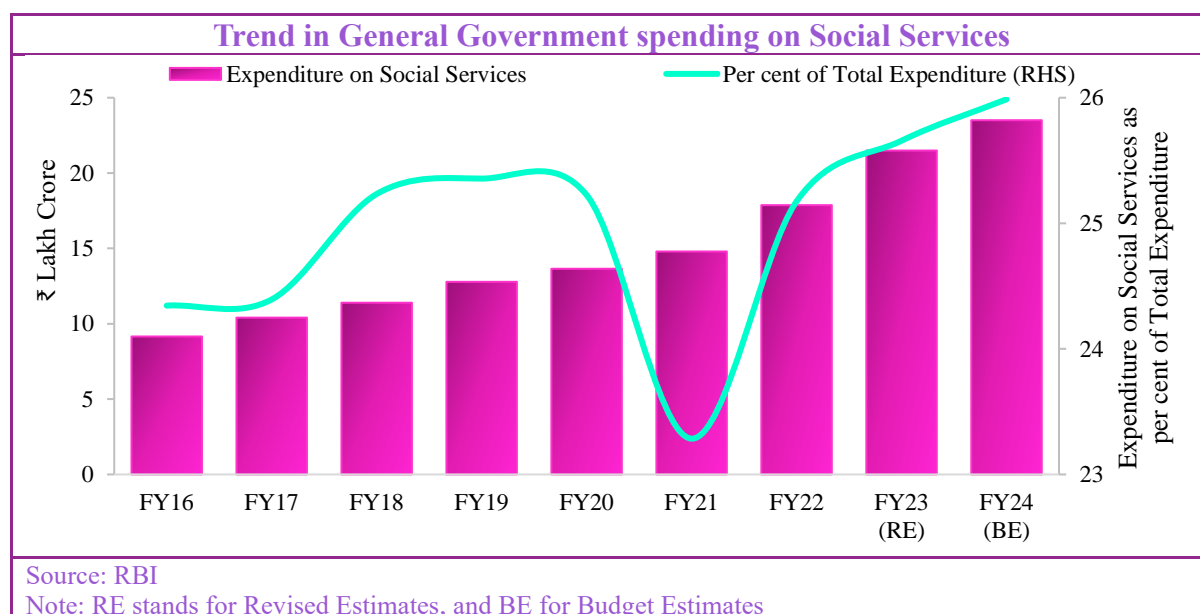
<sup>11</sup> <https://udyamregistration.gov.in/RealTimeUdyamDashboard.aspx>



30. The Naukri Job Speak Index for January 2024 showed a sequential expansion of one per cent while declining by 11 per cent in YoY terms. Healthcare, hospitality and FMCG sectors witnessed high job growth in an otherwise cautious market seeing decline in IT, BPO, and Telecom hiring. With an ongoing boom in domestic and international tourism, demand for restaurant and service managers remained at elevated levels. An uptick in demand in rural areas, aided by a marketing push by FMCG companies, led to positive momentum in the hiring trends in the sector. Senior Professionals and premium jobseekers were in the highest demand. The significant rise in AI-related jobs is indicative of the changing skill requirement in the IT sector. Hiring for niche AI-related roles such as Machine Learning Engineer and Full Stack AI Scientist jumped YoY by 46 per cent and 23 per cent, respectively<sup>12</sup>.

### Social sector spending keeping pace with the growing importance of the sector

31. The General Government spending on social services<sup>13</sup> has shown a rising trend since FY16, with a focus on many aspects of the social well-being of citizens of the country. The share of expenditure on social services in the total expenditure of the Government has been around 25 per cent from FY18 to FY20. It increased to 26 per cent in FY24 (BE). The social services expenditure witnessed an increase of 9.4 per cent in FY24 over FY23, with enhanced outlay in the health<sup>14</sup> and education sectors<sup>15</sup>. While the social sector expenditure outlay of the Centre and State governments was ₹12.8 lakh crore in FY19, it has increased steadily to ₹23.5 lakh crore in FY24 (BE). The share of expenditure on health in the total expenditure on social services has increased from 20.8 per cent in FY19 to 24.9 per cent in FY24 (BE).



<sup>12</sup> [https://www.infoedge.in/pdfs/News\\_Events\\_pdfs/Naukri-Jobspeak-Jan-2024.pdf](https://www.infoedge.in/pdfs/News_Events_pdfs/Naukri-Jobspeak-Jan-2024.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Social services include education, sports, art, and culture; medical and public health, family welfare; water supply and sanitation; housing; urban development; the welfare of SCs, STs and OBCs, labour and labour welfare; social security and welfare, nutrition, relief on account of natural calamities, etc.

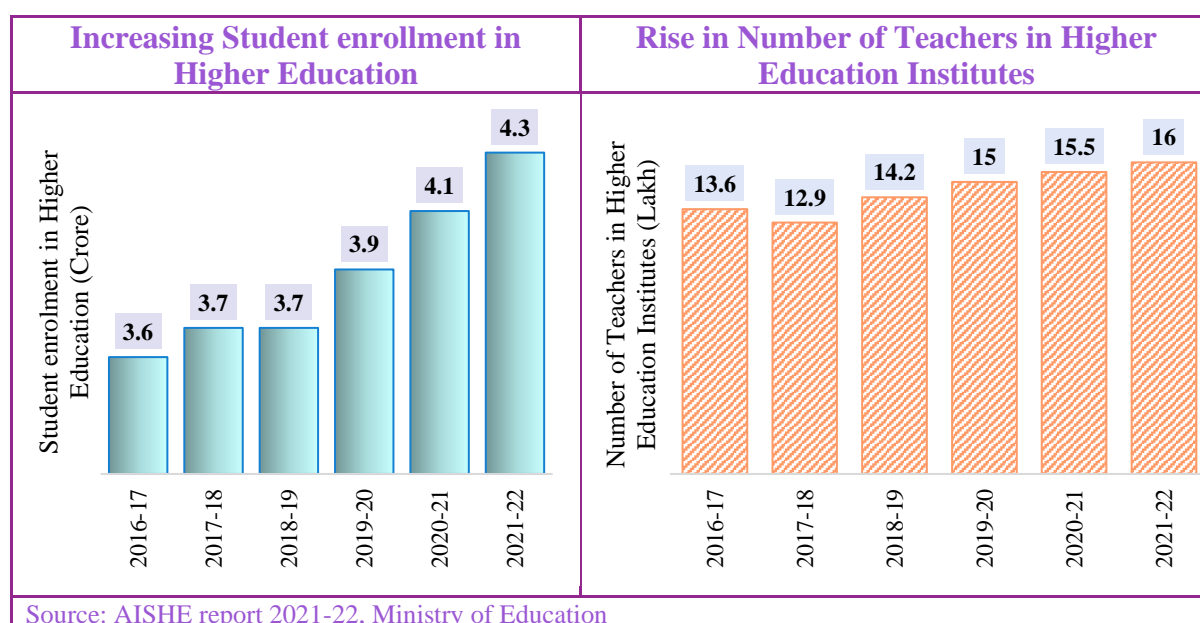
<sup>14</sup> Expenditure on 'Health' includes expenditure on 'Medical and Public Health', 'Family Welfare', and 'Water Supply and Sanitation'.

<sup>15</sup> Expenditure on 'Education' pertains to expenditure on 'Education, Sports, Arts, and culture'.

## Female enrolment higher than that of males in higher education

32. Government initiatives for higher education in the form of the provision of financial support and an increase in the number of Higher Education Institutes have incentivised marginalised/deprived students to take up higher education. Presently, there are 266 higher education institutes, which include Government and private institutes such as IIMs, IITs, NITs, AIIMS, and institutes of national importance, and top 100 National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) ranking institutes. Schemes such as Top-Class Education for SCs, National Overseas Scheme for SCs, National Fellowship for SC Students, Free Coaching Scheme for OBCs and SCs have played a pivotal role in supporting students to secure admission in reputed higher education institutes and obtain appropriate jobs in Public/Private sector<sup>16</sup>.

33. The Indian higher education system is the laboratory of change for one of the largest young populations in the world. As per the latest All India Survey of Higher Education (AISHE) report, 2021-22, released by the Department of Higher Education, there has been a significant enhancement in infrastructure for higher education has been enhanced over time.



A total of 1,168 Universities/University level institutions, 45,473 colleges and 12,002 Standalone Institutions were registered in 2021-22. The total enrolment in higher education has increased to nearly 4.33 crore in 2021-22 from 4.14 crore in 2020-21. Further, female enrollment is higher than male enrollment. In the last five years, the number of women enrolled increased by 18.7 per cent, from 1.7 crore in 2017-18 to 2.1 crore in 2021-22. The most astounding rise was seen at the PhD level. In 2021-22, the total PhD enrollment in the country was 2.1 lakh, of which 98,636 are women. Eight years ago, only 47,717 women were enrolled in PhD programmes. Gender Parity Index (GPI), the ratio of female GER to male GER was 1.01 in 2021-22. GPI has continued to be above 1 since 2017-18, i.e., female

<sup>16</sup> <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetailm.aspx?PRID=1989083>

GER continues to be more than male GER for the fifth consecutive year. About 78.9 per cent of the total students were enrolled in undergraduate-level courses, and 12.1 per cent were enrolled in postgraduate-level courses. Ph.D. enrolment has increased by 81.2 per cent to 2.1 lakh in 2021-22. The total number of faculty/teachers in 2021-22 was 16 lakh, of which about 56.6 per cent were male and 43.4 per cent were female. Female per Male faculty increased from 75 in 2020-21 to 77 in 2021-22.

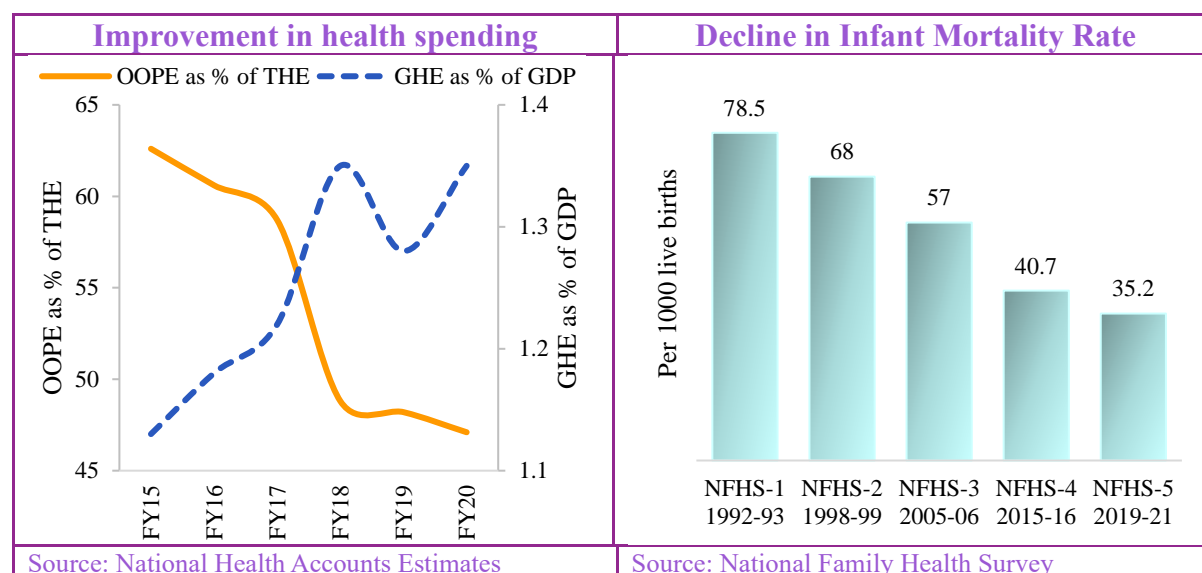
## **Progress towards “Quality Healthcare for All”**

34. For a resilient economy, the resilience of the health sector is key. A sound healthcare system is interconnected with long-term factors responsible for inclusive growth, such as ensuring the quality of human capital, higher household savings, avoiding the poverty trap due to catastrophic health expenditure, and building the capability to withstand health shocks such as COVID-19. In that spirit, the Indian health system has been consistently revamped over the years. On the fiscal front, the National Health Policy of 2017 envisions public investment in health to reach 2.5 per cent of the GDP by 2025. The Department of Health and Family Welfare budget has increased by 91.5 per cent from ₹47,353 crore in FY18 (BE) to ₹90,659 crore in FY25 (BE). The launch of Ayushman Bharat Jan Arogya Yojana in 2018 was a stepping stone towards universal health coverage. At PM Jan Aushadhi Kendras, quality medicines are being sold at 50-90 per cent cheaper rates compared to market rates. Affordable Medicines and Reliable Implants for Treatment (AMRIT) Pharmacy stores have been set up in some hospitals/institutions.

35. To saturate selected health care services in every village/town, the Ayushman Bhav Campaign was launched on 13th September 2023, involving a set of interventions that include ‘Ayushman - Apke Dwar 3.0’, ‘Ayushman Melas’- at Health and Wellness level, Community Health Centre (CHC) Mela and Ayushman Sabha. The National Tele Mental Health Programme, launched in 2022 to strengthen mental health service delivery in the country, has reached a significant milestone. eSanjeevani, launched in 2019, has enabled virtual doctor consultations and connected thousands of people living in remote parts of the country with doctors in major cities while sitting in the comfort of their own homes.

36. The ascent of India as the fastest-growing major economy is accompanied by an advancing quality healthcare system. Highlighting the efforts of the government towards public investments in the health sector, findings from National Health Accounts (NHA) show that various indicators have demonstrated an encouraging trend on a sustained basis. There has been a consistent increase in Government spending on healthcare, coupled with declining Out-of-Pocket Expenditure by people on their healthcare needs. The share of Out-of-Pocket Expenditure (OOPE) in total Health Expenditure (THE) declined from 62.6 per cent in FY15 to 47.1 per cent in FY20. The continuous decline in the OOPE in overall health spending shows progress towards ensuring financial protection and Universal Health Coverage for citizens. During this period, the share of government health expenditure (GHE) in the country's overall GDP increased from 1.1 per cent in FY15 to 1.4 per cent in FY20. The increase in government

spending on health has an important implication for the reduction of financial hardship endured by households. This is accompanied by improvements in key health indicators, such as the infant mortality rate declining from 40.7 per 1000 live births in 2015-16 (NFHS-4) to 35.2 per 1000 live births in 2019-21 (NFHS-5) and the percentage of institutional births rising from 78.9 per cent in 2015-16 to 88.6 per cent in 2019-21.



37. As part of the inclusivity message, the government has proposed a slew of measures in the Interim Budget that indicate its commitment to strengthening the health sector. The announcement of the vaccination of girls in the age group of 9-14 years for the prevention of cervical cancer is a progressive step towards preventive healthcare. Various budget proposals have been introduced to improve women's and children's health and nutritional quality. These include the convergence of various schemes for maternal and child care under one comprehensive programme and the upgradation of Anganwadi centres under “Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0”. The extension of the flagship Ayushman Bharat insurance scheme to all ASHA and Anganwadi workers and helpers will enhance women's participation in healthcare services.

38. A recent study<sup>17</sup> (authored by Dr Sekhar Bonu and Anirudh Krishna) looks at the inter-generational developments in education at the district level. Using NFHS-5 data, they reveal that the average level of the mother's education equals or exceeds that of the father's education in as many as 195 districts (out of 707 districts studied). A generation previously, only 11 districts had more educated mothers than fathers. This points to the presence of inter-generational mobility at the district level.

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.epw.in/journal/2023/42/special-articles/uneven-gains-and-bottom-50-districts.html>

## Transformation of the Aspirational District Programme

39. The Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP), as it marked its six years of implementation in January 2024, stands as a testament to a pragmatic and data-driven approach to socio-economic development in 112 relatively underdeveloped districts of India. This pioneering initiative has been instrumental in addressing critical gaps and fostering collaboration among diverse stakeholders to target efforts in the pockets of deprivation in key areas of health and nutrition, education, agriculture and water resources, etc and thus, contribute to nationwide inclusive and sustainable development.

40. In the last six years, the programme has transformed the lives of about 25 crore people in 112 districts, with visible improvements in key indicators. Based on data from the National Family Health Survey (NHFS-4 and NHFS-5), the Aspirational Districts in India have demonstrated notable positive advancements in health and nutrition indicators, particularly showcasing improvements in the health of pregnant women. As of October 2023, the percentage of pregnant women registered for ante-natal care within the first trimester has improved from an average of 68 per cent to 89 per cent in the aspirational districts. The percentage of institutional deliveries in the total estimated deliveries has improved from 69 per cent to 90 per cent in these districts. There has been a substantial improvement in the health of children as well. For example, the percentage of underweight children below the age of 6 years has declined from 20.6 per cent to 9.2 per cent. In difficult regions like Vidisha, Madhya Pradesh, the immunisation of children has increased from 35 per cent to almost near saturation.

41. The coverage of financial inclusion under key schemes by the Government for insurance, pensions and loans has also increased substantially. The number of bank accounts opened under Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) per lakh population in these districts has gone up from 31,428 to 52,324. The number of enrolments under Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) per lakh population has improved from 1,737 to 13,195.

42. Similar progress has been observed in the education sector, where transition rates of school children have improved significantly, and basic infrastructure is nearing saturation. Districts have shown notable improvement in elementary schools complying with the RTE specified Pupil Teacher Ratio. The transition rate from primary to upper primary school level has increased from 87.8 per cent to 94.2 per cent. The percentage of schools with functional girls' toilets has increased from 87.2 per cent to 98.3 per cent. The percentage of schools with functional drinking water facilities has increased from 87.8 per cent to 98 per cent. According to the NCERT, the aspirational districts are also top performers in learning outcomes across the country. Dhaulpur (Rajasthan), Damoh (Madhya Pradesh), Firozpur (Punjab), Chhatarpur (Madhya Pradesh), Moga (Punjab), and Karauli (Rajasthan) are among the top 30 districts in the country.

43. In the agricultural sector, the percentage of area under Micro Irrigation has increased from 6.5 per cent to 13.8 per cent in the aspirational districts. The Nawada (Bihar) district has seen a notable increase, with the area under micro irrigation going up from 6.1 per cent to 89.2 per cent.

44. There has been a substantial improvement in the availability of basic infrastructure facilities in these districts. The percentage of habitations with access to all-weather roads under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) has increased from 81.1 per cent to 94.2 per cent. Khandwa (East Nimar) (MP) and Chatra (Jharkhand) districts registered a percentage increase of more than 30 per cent. The percentage of Gram Panchayats with internet connections has gone up from 41.5 per cent to 84.3 per cent.

45. The sustained success of the Aspirational Districts Programme can be attributed to its adept coordination of efforts from various stakeholders, including Central and state governments, district administrations, non-governmental organisations, private partners, civil society, and the public. NITI Aayog has played a crucial role in fostering collaboration between State Governments and Central Line Ministries and Departments, acting as a bridge to connect diverse entities with a common goal of upliftment.

46. Following the success of the Aspirational Districts Programme, the government has also launched the Aspirational Blocks Programme (ABP) in January 2023, covering 500 blocks across 27 states and 4 Union Territories. The ABP aims to elevate governance and citizens' quality of life by converging existing schemes, defining outcomes, and continuously monitoring progress.

## Outlook

47. Going forward, the outlook for the Indian economy appears bright. RBI has forecasted India's Real GDP to grow at 7 per cent in FY25, with risks evenly balanced. Prospects of healthy rabi harvesting, sustained manufacturing profitability and underlying service resilience are expected to support economic activity in FY25. On the demand side, household consumption is expected to improve, while prospects for capital formation are bright owing to an upturn in the private capex cycle, improved business sentiments, healthy balance sheets of banks and corporates, and the government's continued thrust on capital expenditure. Improvement in the outlook for global trade and rising integration in the global supply chain will support net external demand. However, headwinds from geopolitical tensions, such as supply chain disruptions and higher logistics costs, volatility in international financial markets, and geoeconomic fragmentation, pose downside risks.

48. Downside risks to trade include a spike in new commodity prices from geopolitical shocks, including continued attacks in the Red Sea and supply disruptions or more persistent underlying inflation in the developed world, which could extend tight monetary conditions.



This could impact the expected recovery in global demand, thereby affecting the prospects for India's exports. On the contrary, the average crude oil FOB price for the Indian basket for FY24 (up to 12 February 2024) at USD 82.2/bbl remains lower than the average of USD 93.2/bbl during FY23. Core inflation for FY24 (up to January 2024) is also the lowest since FY21 (MOSPI). Lower input prices and overall inflation can influence output growth positively, which in turn can further improve the prospects for exports. Given persisting uncertainties for global output and trade growth, finding ways to enhance the competitiveness and attractiveness of India's exports is both urgent and important.

49. As far as inflation is concerned, according to the latest release of inflation data for January 2024, month-on-month momentum in price indices of vegetables, pulses and overall food items is (-) 4.2 per cent, (-) 0.9 per cent and (-) 0.7 per cent, respectively. Hence, it is expected that food inflation will moderate further in the upcoming months. RBI has revised the inflation projection for Q4 of FY24 downward to 5 per cent in the Monetary Policy Statement of February 2024, from 5.2 per cent in the previous MPC meeting. RBI has also kept the policy rate unchanged at 6.5 per cent to facilitate full monetary transmission. With the stable downward movement in core inflation and moderation in food prices, the outlook for a reasonably low headline inflation rate is good.

**For feedback and queries, one may write to: [mer-dea@gov.in](mailto:mer-dea@gov.in)**

This document has been prepared by Bharadwaja Adiraju, Deeksha Supyaal Bisht, Gurvinder Kaur, Harish Kumar Kallega, Megha Arora, Prachi Singhal, Shreya Bajaj and Sonali Chowdhry

### Performance of High Frequency Indicators

Data Title	Unit	YTD Period/As at the end of	Year to Date			Year to Date (YoY Growth)		
			2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Agriculture								
Fertiliser Sales	Mn Tonnes	Apr-Dec	41.5	48.2	49.2	-8.6	16.1	2.1
Domestic Tractor Sales	Lakh	Apr-Jan	7.2	8.0	7.6	-2.9	11.5	-5.0
Rabi Sowing	Mn Hectare	2-Feb	69.8	70.9	70.9	1.1	1.6	0.0
Kharif Production	Mn Tonnes	1st AE	149.9	150.5	148.6	4.1	0.4	-1.3
Reservoir Level	Bn Cu. Metres	8-Feb	109.3	107	87.9	8.3	-2.1	-17.9
Wheat Procurement (RMS)	LMT	NA	433.4	187.9	262	11.2	-56.6	39.4
Rice Procurement (KMS)	LMT	30-Sep-23	575.9	569.5	-	-4.4	-1.1	-
Rainfall	Millimetres	June-Sep	874.5	925	820	-9.0	5.8	-11.4
Credit to Agriculture and allied activities	₹ Lakh crore	Dec	14.6	16.3	19.9	14.2	11.5	22.3
Industry								
IIP	Index	Apr-Dec	128.8	135.9	144.2	15.3	5.5	6.1
8-Core Industries	Index	Apr-Dec	132.5	143.3	154.8	12.6	8.1	8.1
Domestic Auto sales	Lakh	Apr-Dec	121.9	150.2	170.7	-2.8	23.2	13.7
PMI Manufacturing	Index	Apr-Jan	53.9	55.5	57	10.1	3.0	2.8
Power consumption	Billion kWh	Apr-Jan	1030.4	1137	1233.4	9.6	10.3	8.5
Natural gas production	Bn Cu. Metres	Apr-Oct	19.9	20.1	21	21.6	0.8	4.8
Cement production	Index	Apr-Dec	148.9	164.9	180	26.3	10.7	9.2
Steel consumption	Mn Tonnes	Apr-Dec	76.7	85.9	98.4	17.3	11.9	14.5

Data Title	Unit	YTD Period/As at the end of	Year to Date			Year to Date (YoY Growth)		
			2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Inflation								
CPI-C	Index	Apr-Jan	163.2	174.3	183.8	5.3	6.8	5.4
WPI	Index	Apr-Jan	137.9	152.8	151.4	13.2	10.9	-0.9
CFPI	Index	Apr-Jan	163.3	174.5	187.2	3.2	6.9	7.3
CPI-Core	Index	Apr-Jan	162.2	172.1	179.9	6.0	6.1	4.5
Services								
Average Daily ETC Collection	₹ Crore	Apr-Jan	99.2	145.2	173.6	73.2	46.3	19.6
Domestic Air Passenger Traffic	Lakh	Apr-Dec	1177.3	1956.4	2282.4	98.7	66.2	16.7
Port Cargo Traffic	Million tonnes	Apr-Jan	591.3	646.7	677.6	12.3	8.9	5.5
Rail Freight Traffic	Million tonnes	Apr-Jan	1159.1	1243.5	1297.6	17.1	7.3	4.4
PMI Services	Index	Apr-Jan	52.2	57	60.1	33.8	9.2	5.4
Fuel Consumption	Million tonnes	Apr-Jan	164.7	183.2	192.8	3.6	11.2	5.3
UPI (Volume)	Crore	Apr-Jan	3603.4	6753.1	10562.2	108.2	87.4	56.4
E-Way Bill Volume	Crore	Apr-Jan	62.7	78.9	92.1	30.1	25.9	16.8
Fiscal Indicators								
Gross tax revenue (Central Govt)	₹ Lakh crore	Apr-Dec	19.3	21.7	18.3	44.2	12.5	-15.5
Revenue Expenditure	₹ Lakh crore	Apr-Dec	21.3	23.3	23.8	8.0	9.3	2.3
Capital Expenditure	₹ Lakh crore	Apr-Dec	3.9	4.9	5.9	26.8	25.1	19.5
Fiscal Deficit	₹ Lakh crore	Apr-Dec	7.6	9.9	8.8	-34.5	30.8	-11.4
Revenue Deficit	₹ Lakh crore	Apr-Dec	4	5.6	3.4	-55.1	40.9	-39.4
Primary Deficit	₹ Lakh crore	Apr-Dec	1.9	3.1	2.3	-71.8	61.3	-25.0
GST Collection	₹ Lakh crore	Apr-Jan	9.4	11.9	13.3	35.0	23.3	11.4

Data Title	Unit	YTD Period/As at the end of	Year to Date			Year to Date (YoY Growth)		
			2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
External Sector								
Merchandise exports	USD Billion	Apr-Jan	340.3	372.1	353.9	48.6	9.4	-4.9
Non-oil exports	USD Billion	Apr-Jan	289.5	290.8	283.7	38.4	0.5	-2.4
Merchandise imports	USD Billion	Apr-Jan	494.1	601.5	561.1	62.1	21.7	-6.7
Non-oil non-gold/silver imports	USD Billion	Apr-Jan	326.1	392.7	373.6	48.4	20.4	-4.9
Net FDI	USD Billion	Apr-Nov	23.5	19.8	15.4	-33.0	-15.8	-22.1
Exchange Rate	INR/USD	Apr-Jan	74.3	79.9	82.8	-0.3	7.6	3.5
Foreign Exchange Reserves	USD Billion	9th-Feb	632	575.3	617.2	8.2	-9.0	7.3
Import Cover	Months	Jan	13	9	10.6	-	-	-
Monetary and Financial								
Total Bank Credit	₹ Lakh crore	26th Jan	114.7	133.4	160.5	7.2	16.3	20.3
Non-Food Credit	₹ Lakh crore	26th Jan	113.9	132.9	160	7.3	16.7	20.4
10-Year Bond Yields	Per cent	Apr-Nov	6.2	7.3	7.2	0.2	1.1	-0.1
Repo Rate	Per cent	8th Feb	4	6.5	6.5	0.0	2.5	0.0
Currency in Circulation	₹ Lakh crore	9th Feb	30.7	33.3	34.5	8.1	8.5	3.6
M0	₹ Lakh crore	9th Feb	38.2	42.5	45	13.0	11.3	5.9
Employment								
Net payroll additions (EPFO)	Lakh	Apr-Dec	81.3	101.1	108.5	87.1	24.4	7.4
Persons demanded employment under MGNREGA	Crore	Apr-Jan	33.9	27.7	28.3	-8.8	-18.5	2.3
Urban Unemployment Rate	Per cent	Oct-Dec	8.7	7.2	6.5	-1.6	-1.5	-0.7
Subscriber Additions (NPS)	Lakh	Apr-Nov	6.8	7.1	7.9	22.5	4.1	12.1