

RBI MONETARY POLICY COMMITTEE MEETS JUNE 6

Food inflation shadow over RBI rate meeting

Between December 2018 and April 2019, annual wholesale food price inflation rose from -0.42% to 7.37%

HARISH DAMODARAN & PARTHA SARATHI BISWAS
NEW DELHI, PUNE, JUNE 2

MOST EXPECT the RBI's monetary policy committee to slash interest rates in its review meeting Thursday. Bond markets also reflect this expectation: On Friday, yields on the benchmark

10-year government paper fell to 7.03 per cent, the lowest since November 25, 2017.

But there's an elephant in the room: food inflation.

Between December 2018 and April 2019, annual wholesale price inflation for food articles has risen from minus 0.42 per cent to 7.37 per cent. During the same period, the year-on-year increase in the consumer

food price inflation — which is what the RBI tracks — has been much less, from minus 2.65 per cent to 1.10 per cent. However, the underlying trend of food prices firming up after a long gap

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MARKETS BET ON RBI TO CUT RATES

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FARM SECTOR GROWTH

	(% year-on-year)	
	CONSTANT PRICES	CURRENT PRICES
Apr-Jun 2016	4.58	13.91
Jul-Sep 2016	6.01	13.85
Oct-Dec 2016	6.73	10.03
Jan-Mar 2017	7.37	11.71
Apr-Jun 2017	4.16	2.78
Jul-Sep 2017	4.48	7.30
Oct-Dec 2017	4.58	9.12
Jan-Mar 2018	6.53	7.74
Apr-Jun 2018	5.05	6.78
Jul-Sep 2018	4.93	4.17
Oct-Dec 2018	2.79	2.07
Jan-Mar 2019	-0.13	3.78

Note: Farm sector includes agriculture, forestry and fishing
Source: Central Statistics Office

On Goyal table: Key challenges in foreign trade, disputes in WTO

ANIL SASI
NEW DELHI, JUNE 2



Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal

WHILE THE decision by the United States to end preferential trade status for India from June 5 calls for urgent attention, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal's larger challenge will be to address the reverses faced by India during the last 12 months on both bilateral and multilateral fronts over alleged protectionism.

On May 14, Japan complained to the WTO against import duties imposed by India over the last 24 months on a wide range of electronic products such as mobile phones and components, and integrated circuits. Soon afterward, China and Thailand expressed interest in joining consultations in the case filed by Japan. Singapore, Canada, and Chinese Taipei are learnt to have sought to join, too.

Much of this played out when the general elections were under way in India, and the new government is learnt to be tak-

ing stock of the widening impact of these trade challenges.

In early April, the European Union, which oversees trade policy for the 28-member bloc, had separately launched a WTO dispute against India over import duties levied on electronic products.

But the action is not limited to electronics. Late last year, Australia moved to refer India to the WTO over subsidies paid to sugarcane farmers. (The government had approved a fresh Rs 5,538-crore package for the sugar industry in September.) Brazil has lodged a separate complaint on the matter, and Guatemala, too, is learnt to have initiated a dispute complaint. On November 12, the US had alleged at the Geneva-based global trade

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Pak stops guests from attending iftaar hosted by Indian envoy, India protests

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, JUNE 2



Photo of Harish Kumar tweeted by CM Ashok Gehlot

Rajasthani folk dancer Queen Harish dies in road accident

SUANSHU KHURANA
NEW DELHI, JUNE 2

THE GLITTERING ghagra choli, bangles all the way up to his shoulders, Salvatore Ferragamo pumps and bright makeup — every time Harish Kumar aka Queen Harish walked onto the stage, he would light it up with his lithe moves and the mesmerised audience would soon forget that this was a man in drag. "I don't want to present dance in drag as an imitation of something people have seen. I want my dance to be looked upon as a dignified presentation in itself," Queen Harish had said some years ago while sitting in the Zenana courtyard of Mehrangarh Fort in Jodhpur

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Tit for tat response ahead of SCO meet

PAKISTANI SECURITY agencies' action seems to be a tit-for-tat response to what India did during the March 23 Pakistan National Day event in New Delhi. Coming days after the re-election of the Narendra Modi government and with leaders from both countries heading towards Bishkek for the SCO summit on June 13-14, all eyes will be on whether they are able to hit the refresh button on ties.

INDIA ON Sunday lodged a strong protest by issuing a note verbale to Pakistan over intimidation of guests invited for an iftaar party in Islamabad on Saturday. The iftaar, traditionally held in the holy month of Ramzan, was hosted by Indian High Commissioner Ajay Bisaria at Hotel Serena in Islamabad's Diplomatic Enclave.

A statement from the Indian High Commission in Islamabad said more than 300 Pakistani

guests were turned away, including parliamentarians, government officials, media representatives, retired military officials, businessmen, and retired diplomats, in addition to citizens

In Champions League final, Liverpool fans chant for Egyptian hero: 'I'll be Muslim too'

MIHIR VASAVDA
MADRID, JUNE 2

"If he scores another few, Then I'll be Muslim too... If he's good enough for you, He's good enough for me, Then sitting in a mosque, is where I wanna be Mo Salah-la-la-la-lah! Mo Salah-la-la-la-lah!"

ESTADIO METROPOLITANO is shaking. Around 20,000

Liverpool supporters are bouncing in the stands, paying the ultimate homage to their "King". Most of them haven't even settled in their seats when Mohamed Salah hammers home a penalty in the second minute. But they see him sprint towards the corner flag, slide on his knees and raise his arms skywards. The unassuming celebration can mean just one thing — a goal has been scored.

This isn't just another goal. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**



Mo Salah and his teammates return to Liverpool Sunday after winning the Champions League final. Reuters

Draft NEP: Elite used English to marginalise large sections of society

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 2



On Hindi, Jaishankar tweeted: 'No language will be imposed'

ATTRIBUTING THE popularity of English to its adoption by the country's "economic elite", the draft National Education Policy (NEP) 2018 states that large sections of society are marginalised because the privileged use English "as a criterion" to determine if someone is educated and "as a prerequisite" for the jobs that they control.

For equity and inclusion in society, the "power structure of language must be stopped at the earliest", the draft states.

"A major effort in this direction must be taken by the elite and the educated to make increased use of languages native to India, and give these languages the space and respect that they deserve (particularly in hiring, societal events, and in schools and all educational institutions, **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

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SPORT

BANGLADESH STUN SOUTH AFRICA IN WORLD CUP PAGE 16

In World Cup season, a story of cricket and hope from a tribal village in Jharkhand



Umesh Srivastava with his boys in Kenduataand. Abhishek Angad

ABHISHEK ANGAD
DHANBAD, JUNE 2

ON WEDNESDAY, India take on South Africa in their first match of this World Cup in Southampton. It will be the first step of a journey that a billion fans hope will end with the trophy at Lord's in London on July 14. And if that happens, among those celebrating will be an entire village located thousands of kilometres to the east — in Jharkhand's Dhanbad district.

But then, for the cricketers of Kenduataand in East Tundi block, all Santhal tribals, cricket has been a journey in itself — from an "aimless and wayward life" to one of "purpose" and "hope". In Kenduataand, the first step was taken seven years ago by Sipon Tudu, a 24-year-old M S Dhoni fan who "cycled for an hour" and then hopped on to a truck carrying sand to reach the Dhanbad Sports Academy run by

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local coach Umesh Srivastava. "I was asked to take a trial and then admitted to the academy as an allrounder for a fee of Rs 250 a month. But within three months, I was struggling. My family of seven has five bighas of land, and it's just enough for our survival. My elder brother works as a daily wage labourer," says Tudu, who studied up to Class 12 and now works on his farm land when not playing cricket. "When Sipon told me about his village, I asked him to bring everyone along. I told him I would not charge any fee. But even sparing Rs 50 per day for **CONTINUED ON PAGE 7**

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