- The annual rate of inflation, stood at 12.98 percent for the week ended 19/03/2011 (over 20/03/2010) as compared to 13.53 percent for the previous week (ended 12/03/2011).

- The Index of Six core industries (Crude Oil, Petroleum Refinery Products, Coal, Electricity, Cement, Finished carbon steel) registered a growth of 6.8% to 4.2% registered in February 2010. During April-February 2010-11, six core industries registered a growth of 5.7%) as against 5.4% during the corresponding period of the previous year.

- Country's Population Reaches 1210 Million as Per Census 2011: of which 63.72 million (51.54%) are males and 586.46 million (48.46%) are females. UP remains most populous State with 199 million followed by Maharashtra with 112 million. Overall Sex Ratio reaches 940 – 7 points increase over 2001. Literacy Rate goes up to 74.04 percent from 64.83 percent. The population of India has increased by more than 181 million during the decade 2001-2011. 2001-2011 is the first decade (with the exception of 1911-1921) which has actually added lesser population compared to the previous decade. The total number of children in the age-group 0-6 is 158.8 million (-5 million since 2001). The total number of children in the age-group 0-6 is 158.8 million (-5 million since 2001). Uttar Pradesh (29.7 million), Bihar (18.6 million), Maharashtra (12.8 million), Madhya Pradesh (10.5 million) and Rajasthan (10.5 million) constitute 52% children in the age group of 0-6 years.

- Latin America: Ready for an Aging Revolution? : Report advises Latin American countries to prepare for a 'greying revolution'; rapid aging no longer a rich country phenomenon. Region's life expectancy jumped by 22 years in last half-century; population now dominated by working adults with fewer children. Report recommends building stronger health systems, delaying retirement age, reforming pension systems and creating more jobs for women to expand the workforce.

- The percentage decadal growth rates of the six most populous States have declined during 2001-2011 compared to 1991-2001:

  - Uttar Pradesh (25.85% to 20.09%)
  - Maharashtra (22.73% to 15.99%)
  - Bihar (28.62% to 25.07%)
  - West Bengal (17.77 % to 13.93%)
  - Andhra Pradesh (14.59% to 11.10%)
  - Madhya Pradesh (24.26% to 20.30%)

- States' commitment towards fiscal consolidation evident in 2010-11: The budgetary position of States in 2010-11 indicated a turnaround from the expansionary fiscal stance in 2008-09 and 2009-10 to a fiscal consolidation path in 2010-11. An improvement in State finances is evident with a majority of the States budgeting either a revenue surplus or a lower revenue deficit in 2010-11 (BE) as compared with 2009-10 (RE). At a consolidated level, the revenue deficit is placed lower at 0.3 per cent of GDP during 2010-11 (BE) as against 0.7 per cent in 2009-10 (RE) reflecting compression in revenue expenditure. With an improvement in the consolidated revenue account of States, the gross fiscal deficit as a ratio to GDP (GFD-GDP) is estimated to decline to 2.5 per cent in 2010-11 (BE) from 3.3 per cent in 2009-10 (RE).

- Improvement in key fiscal indicators to be broad-based across States: An improvement in State finances in 2010-11, based on the budgetted data, is broad-based and is reflected in lower GFD-GSDP ratios in the case of 22 States. Of the 17 non-special category States, 11 States have budgetted lower GFD-GSDP ratios in 2010-11. All special category States have budgetted lower GFD-GSDP ratio during the same period. A majority of the States expect higher tax buoyancy (including own tax and tax devolution from the Centre), while non-tax revenues (own non-tax revenues and grants from the Centre) are budgetted to decline in 18 States. The revenue expenditure as ratio to GSDP is budgetted to decline in 19 States, which is likely to be a major source for correction in their revenue accounts.

- Decline in key expenditure ratios raises concern regarding the quality of fiscal adjustment: The emerging pattern of expenditure shows that as a ratio to GSDP, development expenditure, capital outlay and social sector expenditure are budgetted to be lower in many States, raising concerns about the quality of fiscal adjustment being undertaken at the State level.

- Decline in States' overall debt-GDP ratio to continue in 2010-11: Despite the extra expenditure obligations emanating from the implementation of revised pay structures and fiscal stimulus measures, the impact in terms of debt-GSDP ratios remained muted in most States during 2008-09 and 2009-10 (RE). Importantly, aggregate debt-GDP ratio at 25.0 per cent in 2009-10 (RE) was well below the level of 30.8 per cent recommended by the Twelfth Finance Commission (FC). In 2010-11 (BE), the aggregate outstanding debt-GDP ratio of States is likely to decline further to 23.1 per cent, reflecting higher growth in GSDP than that in outstanding debt. The declining trend in debt-GDP ratio would have favourable implications for interest payments (IP) relative to revenue receipts (RR). State-wise data show that 11 States were able to align their IP-RR ratios with the Twelfth FC's target of 15 per cent by 2009-10. The overall IP-RR ratio is budgetted to decline to 14.1 per cent in 2010-11 from 14.4 per cent in 2009-10 (RE), though it remains very high in some States.

- Potentially catastrophic climate impacts on food production over the long-term. Food security merits greater space in the climate change agenda: "Potentially catastrophic" impacts on food production from slow-onset climate changes are expected to increasingly hit the developing world in the future and action is needed now to prepare for those anticipated impacts, FAO warned in a submission to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

- The Ministry of Food & Public Distribution has decided to make available 19.07 lakh tons of Sugar (levy sugar 2.07 lakh tons and non-levy sugar 17.00 lakh tons) for the Month of April 2011

- On a year-on-year (y-o-y) basis, non-food gross bank credit grew by 22.8 per cent in February 2011 as compared with 15.9 per cent in the corresponding period of last year. During the current financial year (up to February 2011), non-food gross bank credit growth was 16.8 per cent as compared with 11.1 per cent during the corresponding period of previous year. All major sectors, except agriculture, recorded accelerated credit growth in February 2011, both on a y-o-y and financial year basis.

- Credit to agriculture on a y-o-y basis grew at a lower rate of 18.3 per cent in February 2011 as compared with 24.4 per cent in the previous year. During the financial year up to February 2011, credit to agriculture grew by 5.3 per cent as compared with 9.4 per cent during the corresponding period of previous year.

- Credit to industry grew by 26.5 per cent (y-o-y) in February 2011 as compared with an increase of 20.1 per cent in the previous year, led by infrastructure, metals, engineering, food processing, rubber, plastic and their products and cement and cement products. On a financial year basis (up to February 2011), credit growth to industry was 20.4 per cent as compared with 18.4 per cent during the corresponding period of the previous year.

- Credit to the services sector grew by 24.2 per cent (y-o-y) in February 2011 as compared with 15.4 per cent in the previous year. On a financial year basis, it grew by 18.3 per cent as compared with an increase of 7.1 per cent during the corresponding period of the previous year.

- Credit growth to NBFCs at 46.4 per cent on a y-o-y basis in February 2011 was significantly higher than the growth of 19.8 per cent during the corresponding period of the previous year. On a financial year basis, credit to NBFCs increased by 39.9 per cent as compared with 9.7 per cent during the corresponding period of previous year.

- Credit offtake by the commercial real estate (CRE) sector at 17.8 per cent on a y-o-y basis in February 2011 was higher than the growth of 0.9 per cent during the corresponding period of the previous year. On a financial year basis, credit to the CRE sector grew by 17.1 per cent as against a decline of 0.9 per cent during the corresponding period of previous year.

- On a y-o-y basis, personal loans grew by 16.2 per cent in February 2011 substantially higher than the growth of 4.1 per cent during the corresponding period of the previous year, with most of its components such as housing, advances against fixed deposits, vehicle loans and education exhibiting accelerated growth. On a financial year basis, growth in personal loans accelerated to 14.8 per cent from 2.8 per cent during the corresponding period of previous year.

- Net claims of non-residents on India as reflected by the Net IIP (International financial assets less International financial liabilities) increased by US$ 18.2 billion over the previous quarter to US$ 221.1 billion as at end- December 2010, mainly due to increase in net inflow on account of direct and portfolio investments as well as external commercial borrowings (ECBs)

- International financial assets stood at US$ 407.5 billion as at end-December 2010 with increase of US$ 4.6 billion over the previous quarter. Reserve assets, which remained the major source, increased by US$ 4.5 billion to US$ 297.3 billion at end-December 2010. Among other sources, Direct Investment abroad moved up by US$ 3.2 billion during the quarter to US$ 92.4 billion as at end-December 2010.

- International financial liabilities increased by US$ 22.7 billion over the previous quarter to US$ 628.6 billion as at end-December 2010. Direct and portfolio investments in India increased by US$ 6.1 billion and US$ 7.5 billion, respectively and among other investments, trade credit and loans (mainly ECBs) increased by US$ 3.0 billion and US$ 5.6 billion respectively.

- The declining trend in the ratio of India's international financial assets to international financial liabilities continued during the latest quarter and the ratio stood at 64.8 per cent in December 2010 (66.5 per cent by September 2010).

- Railways surpass all previous records in Network Expansion during 2010-11. Highest ever achievement in construction of new Railway Lines since Independence: Railways has achieved the progress of construction of 709 kilometres of new lines in the year 2010-11, against the annual average progress of 180 kilometres new lines since independence. The overall achievement in construction of new lines, gauge conversion and doubling projects during 2010-11 has been 2315 kilometres, which is also the highest ever achieved in a year since independence.

- Tax Exemption under section for the ICC Cricket World Cup 2011: Tax Exemption under section for the ICC Cricket World Cup 2011 The Union Cabinet today approved the proposal of Ministry of Finance for exempting ICC Cricket World Cup 2011 from income tax under section 10(39) of the Income Tax Act 1961 in respect of income which is arising in the India from the ICC World Cup, 2011 to the subsidiaries of the ICC, only where the contractual obligation to bear the income-tax liability is on these entities. The financial implication will be Rs.45 crore approximately.

- India's External Debt Stood at US$ 297.5 Billion at End-December 2010: At end-December 2010, India's external debt stock stood at US$ 297.5 billion reflecting an increase of US$ 36.3 billion (13.9 per cent) over the level of US$ 261.2 billion at end-March

2010. The long-term debt increased by US$ 26.0 billion to US$ 234.9 billion i.e. an increase of 12.5 per cent. The short-term debt showed an increase of US$ 10.3 billion to US$ 62.6 billions i.e. an increase of 19.7 per cent. Of the total increase of US$ 36.3 billion in India's external debt at end-December, the valuation effect arising from depreciation of the US dollar against major international currencies accounted for US$ 5.3 billion (14.6 per cent). Excluding the valuation effect, the increase in external debt would have been US$ 31.0 billion. India's external debt to GDP ratio and debt service ratios stood at 16.9 per cent and 3.9 per cent respectively, at end-December 2010. The ratio of short-term external debt to foreign exchange reserves was 21.1 per cent at end-December 2010 as compared to 18.8 per cent at end-March 2010.

- Exports during February, 2011 were valued at US $ 23597 million (Rs. 107215 crore) which was 49.7 per cent higher in Dollar terms (46.9 per cent higher in Rupee terms) than the level of US $ 15758 million (Rs. 73002 crore) during February, 2010.

- Imports during February, 2011 were valued at US $ 31701 million (Rs.144037 crore) representing a growth of 21.2 per cent in Dollar terms (18.8 per cent in Rupee terms) over the level of imports valued at US $ 26164 million (Rs. 121212 crore) in February, 2010.

- Oil imports during February, 2011 were valued at US $ 8219 million which was 0.3 per cent lower than oil imports valued at US $ 8240 million in the corresponding period last year.

- Non-oil imports during February, 2011 were estimated at US $ 23482 million which was 31.0 per cent higher than non-oil imports of US $ 17924 million in February,2010

- The trade deficit for April - February, 2010-11 was estimated at US $ 97069 million which was lower than the deficit of US $ 100249 million during April -February, 2009-10.

- Emerging Asian Bond Markets Register Strong Growth in 2010 - ADB Report: Emerging East Asia's local currency bond markets expanded by 13.6% to $5.2 trillion in 2010, driven by strong growth in corporate bonds that helped to offset a decline in issuance by central banks and some governments in the last quarter of 2010. The latest edition of the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) quarterly Asia Bond Monitor shows that growth has been broad-based. The region's local currency bond markets, excluding the People's Republic of China (PRC), expanded by 11.6% year-on-year in 2010. Meanwhile, total bonds outstanding in the PRC, the region's largest market, grew 15.1% year-on-year to reach $3.1 trillion.

- Import policy of Vehicles: According to Notification No. 39(RE-2010)/2009-2014 the sale of vehicles imported by Foreign Diplomats and Other Privileged Persons is now permitted to other non privileged persons also in the manner specified in Foreign Privileged Persons (Regulation of Customs Privileges) Rules, 1957, as amended.

- Removal of restriction on export of cotton yarn: According to Notification No. 40 (RE-2010)/2009-14 the export of cotton yarn (Tariff Codes 5205, 5206 & 5207) was earlier "Restricted" with export allowed against licence. Now, the export of cotton yarn is "Free" subject to registration of export contracts with DGFT.

- Non-availability of DEPB benefit on export of Cotton: According to Public Notice No. 45 (RE-2010) /2009-2014 Benefit under DEPB scheme encourages export of concerned commodity. Hence when the intention of the Government is not to encourage exports of specific commodity, DEPB benefit on such a commodity would be contradictory to its intention. Accordingly, this Public Notice clarifies that DEPB benefit on export of cotton shall not be available. DEPB benefit on export of cotton yarn was withdrawn with effect from 21.4.2010; therefore, DEPB benefit on cotton (the basic raw material for cotton yarn) has been disallowed for exports made from 21.4.2010 onwards.

- Export of Goods and Software – Realisation andRepatriation of export proceeds – Liberalisation: enhancing the period of realization and repatriation to India of the amount representing the full export value of goods or software exported, from six months to twelve months from the date of export. This relaxation was up to March 31, 2011.The issue has since been reviewed and it has been decided, in consultation with the Government of India, to extend the above relaxation up to September 30, 2011, subject to review. The provisions in regard to period of realization and repatriation to India of the full export value of goods or software exported by a unit situated in a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) as well as exports made to warehouses established outside India remains unchanged.

- Despite Third Proviso to s. 254(2A), ITAT can extend stay beyond 365 days: Tata Comm Ltd vs. ACIT (Special Bench)

- Transfer Pricing: +/- 5% Adjustment Must For Mean ALP: Cummins India Limited vs. DCIT (ITAT Pune)

- No s. 14A disallowance of interest on borrowed funds used to buy trading shares: Yatish Trading vs. ACIT (ITAT Mumbai)

- S. 14A disallowance cannot be made for "depreciation": Hoshang D Nanavati vs. ACIT (ITAT Mumbai)

- Transfer Pricing: Prior Years' Data Cannot Be Used: TNT India Private Limited vs. ACIT (ITAT Bangalore)

- Transfer Pricing: For TNMM interest on surplus & abnormal cost to be excluded: Marubeni India vs ACIT (ITAT Delhi)