

Retail inflation at 5-mth low, IIP hits 4-mth high

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Retail inflation eased to a five-month low in March on the marginally moderating food inflation, while industrial output growth rebounded to a four-month high in Feb, led by robust infra sectors and consumer durables output.

Data released by the National Statistical Office, nearly an hour late from the official release time, showed retail inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index, rose an annual 4.9% in March, lower than the 5.1% in Feb. Rural inflation was higher at 5.5% while urban was at 4.1%. The food price index was marginally lower at 8.5% in March compared with 8.7% in the previous month.

Vegetables prices rose an annual 28.3% in March while pulses and product prices re-

Experts See **Rate Cuts** In 2nd Half Of FY25

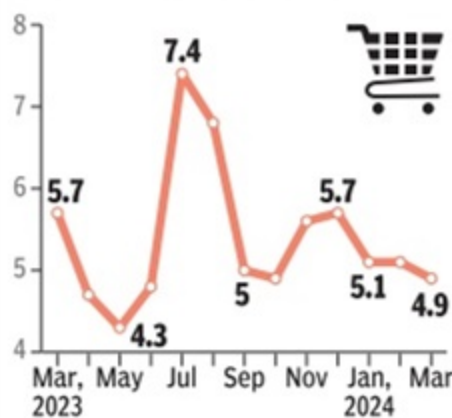
Industrial output growth rebounds on base effect

Industrial output growth (%)



Retail inflation eases as food prices moderate marginally

CPI-based Inflation (%)



Source: Govt

mained stubborn at 17.7% keeping up the pressure.

"We estimate the food & beverages inflation to remain above the 7% mark in April 2024. An intensification of the impending heat-wave may worsen the seasonal uptick in prices of perishables, heightening the criticality of a favourable

monsoon in 2024 to keep food inflation in check and inflationary expectations well-anchored," said Aditi Nayar, chief economist at ratings agency Icra.

Separate data released by the NSO showed industrial output growth rose an annual 5.7%, higher than the 4.1% in Jan, helped by the base effect.