Global economic activity remained subdued in the first half of 2019 amid an ongoing tariff dispute between the United States and China.

Despite an uptick in natural gas production and improvements in the construction and finance sectors, lower levels of economic activity were recorded in both the energy and non-energy sectors in the first quarter of 2019.

Headline inflation continued its low and stable trend into the first eight months of 2019, reflective of subdued demand conditions and low imported inflation.

Higher energy prices in the first ten months of fiscal 2018/2019 supported the improved year-on-year performance in the Central Government accounts.

The spillovers from the positive developments in the domestic energy sector coupled with the acceleration of Government capital expenditure projects are expected to provide the impetus for a modest revival of the non-energy sector.

In June 2019, the Central Bank maintained the Repo rate at 5.0 per cent, given the low domestic inflationary environment and recovering economy.

Labour market conditions remained slack during the first eight months of 2019.

The foreign exchange market remained relatively tight in the first eight months of 2019 despite higher foreign exchange inflows from the energy sector.

Gross official reserves declined in the first eight months of 2019.

Global growth is anticipated to face another challenging year in 2019.

Crude oil prices recovered in the first eight months of 2019 but remained below peak levels of 2018.

In Summary:

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- Despit...