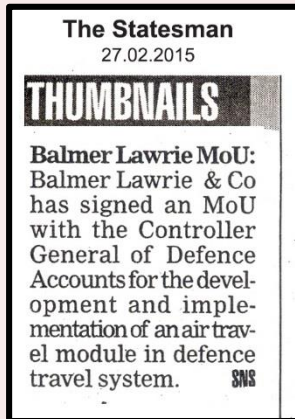


(This document comprises news clips from various media in which Balmer Lawrie is mentioned, news related to GOI and PSEs, and news from the verticals that we do business in. This will be e-mailed on every Monday.)

Balmer Lawrie in News



Balmer Lawrie signs MoU with CGDA to develop air travel module

Links to online coverage

- http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/balmer-lawrie-signs-mou-with-cgda-to-develop-air-travel-module-115022600972_1.html
- <http://money.livemint.com/news/company/news/balmer-lawrie-inks-mou-with-cgda-for-air-travel-361971.aspx>
- <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Balmer-Lawrie>
- http://www.indiainfoline.com/article/news-top-story/balmer-lawrie-signs-mou-with-cgda-for-air-travel-115022700993_1.html
- http://www.equitybulls.com/admin/news2006/news_det.asp?id=155651
- http://www.indiablooms.com/ibns_new/finance-details/1666/balmer-lawrie-signs-mou-with-cgda-for-air-travel.html
- <http://www.sarkaritel.com/balmerlawrie-signs-mou-with-cgda-for-air-travel-187624/>
- <http://www.psukhabar.com/ReadArticle.php?id=1021&table=whispers>
- <http://www.niticentral.com/2015/02/27/balmer-lawrie-signs-mou-with-cgda-to-develop-air-travel-module-303899.html>
- <http://www.sarkarimirror.com/balmer-lawrie-co-ltd-signs-mou-with-controller-general-of-defence-accounts/>

(The news was covered by many other online media)

Moody's tips on reforms

Rating agency Moody's today said fiscal and structural reforms by the central government would determine India's sovereign credit profile. These comments come at a time the Centre is having a tough time in Parliament with its land

S&P now says India 'bright spot', ups GDP forecast 7.9% for 2015-16

International rating agency Standard & Poor's has sharply revised India's growth forecast upwards to 7.9% for 2015-16 and 8.2% in the year after, crediting the move to rising

acquisition bill. Moody's pointed out that though the upward revision of India's GDP growth based on "methodological and base year updates" display the strength of its economy, it will not impact its overall assessment of the sovereign credit profile. "Rather, fiscal and structural reform policies will determine the extent to which accelerating growth will buttress the sovereign credit profile," Moody's added.

India's GDP growth in the fiscal year ended March 2014 is estimated at 6.9 per cent under the new methodology, up from 5 per cent under the earlier methodology. The newly released data underscore the fact that India's high economic growth supports its sovereign credit rating of Baa3 with a stable outlook. However, it does not change the ratios for government finances, private external leverage and bank asset quality - all of which continue to pose sovereign credit risks. "In times of both accelerating and decelerating growth, India's wide fiscal deficits, poor infrastructure and regulatory complexity have combined to create a mismatch between the domestic demand and supply, contributing to inflation and current-account pressures," it said. According to Moody's, in the current year, benign global oil prices are likely to keep India's inflation and current account pressures in check.

The Telegraph - 25.02.2015

http://www.telegraphindia.com/1150226/jsp/business/story_5506.jsp#.VPQ_8f8fpMs

Growth-oriented budget shows clear intent to push economy

The budget unveiled by the Narendra Modi-led government has come at a time when the green shoots of economic revival have started appearing. It also comes riding on the back of huge expectations. My impression is that the Finance Minister has delivered a budget that is strong on vision, reflects clear intent to put the economy on the path of double-digit growth and has a strategy to execute challenging reforms in critical areas. From a macroeconomic perspective, the government has done well to meet the fiscal deficit target of 4.1 per cent. The softening of global crude oil and commodity prices has contributed significantly to a lower current account deficit. Foreign Exchange reserves at \$ 340 billion are at an all-time high. The government is committed to keep inflation below 5 per cent. All these factors have given the Finance Minister a platform to lay out a roadmap for lowering fiscal deficit to 3.9 per cent in FY 2015-16, to 3.5 per cent in FY 2016-17 and to 3 per cent in FY 2017-18. The budget clearly provides a tremendous impetus to 'Make in India'.

India Express - 01.03.2015

<http://indianexpress.com/article/cities/mumbai/growth-oriented-budget-shows-clear-intent-to-push-economy/>

investment and fall in oil prices as it singled out the country in the region while trimming its forecasts for China, Japan and the four Asian Tigers. "India should be the Asia-Pacific region's bright spot. We revised our growth forecasts for the country upward, reflecting new official data based on methodological improvements," the US-based agency said in a statement on Thursday.

The agency, which rates India among the lowest in the investment grade at BBB-, did not specify in the brief note sent to the press whether it had revised its estimates on the basis of the revisions in GDP computation. In the note, the agency said that growth in the Asia-Pacific region will be slightly lower but India is poised to do well. "Weaker growth in China and Japan may be weighing on the overall sentiment, although India's star is rising," it said. The agency, in its report titled 'Stronger US Economy And Lower Oil Prices Aren't Boosting Asia-Pacific Growth', slashed its GDP growth forecast for China to 6.9% for this year and to 6.6% in 2016, from 7.1% and 6.7% respectively.

Economic Times - 27.02.2015

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2015-02-27/news/59584957_1_growth-forecast-asia-pacific-chief-economist-growth-target

Market reactions to Union Budget 2015

It has been a volatile day for the markets as they reacted to the Union Budget 2015 proposals. After a slipping into the negative turf in late morning deals, the markets rebounded after the Finance Minister Arun Jaitley in his Budget speech announced reduction in corporate tax to 25% from 30% for a period of four years. Meanwhile, the Finance Minister has deferred GAAR (General Anti Avoidance Rule) by a period of two years.

As per Nandkumar Surti, MD & CEO, JPMorgan AMC - It is a very strong budget. Emphasis has been on tax simplification, tax compliance and infrastructure spend which is the need of the hour. The government has rightly delayed the Fiscal Deficit target by a year given the private sector challenge to spend money on infrastructure. The priorities are very clear. The direct association of increased excise duty to be spend on road infrastructure shows good use of the increased revenue.

Business Standard - 28.02.2015

http://www.business-standard.com/budget/article/market-reactions-to-union-budget-2015-115022800735_1.html

Budget 2015: States owning PSU land may get selloff share

The central government may agree to share revenues with states in some cases of strategic sale of loss-making firms where the land bank available with public sector units is owned by the state government, a senior official said. The government has already identified about 18 such non-viable firms where it can possibly shed its stake, the official said on the condition of anonymity. "There are some loss-making PSUs where land bank is available but on lease from the state government. If we agree to share proceeds, the state governments will be more agreeable to come on board regarding strategic sale," the official said, explaining the motivation on part of the Centre to explore the revenue sharing model with the state governments concerned.

The Economic Times - 02.03.2015

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/budget-2015-states-owning-psu-land-may-get-selloff-share/articleshow/46425513.cms>

Centre to consider suggestions on disinvestment, winding up NIF

The Centre will examine the 14th Finance Commission's recommendations that the government should share with states the money raised from selling its stake in central public sector enterprises (CPSEs) and that the National Investment Fund (NIF) be wound up. The commission noted that there is considerable merit in the union government dispensing a small share of proceeds of disinvestment to the states. The commission expects the disinvestment proceeds to grow at 25% a year from 2015-16 to 2019-20. "In the case of CPSEs with multiple units located in different states, distribution of this share could be uniform across all the states where units are located," the commission said in its report.

The Economic Times - 25.02.2015

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/centre-to-consider-suggestions-on-disinvestment-winding-up-nif/articleshow/46363394.cms>

S&P sees India's sovereign rating unchanged next year

Ratings agency Standard & Poor's does not expect an upgrade to India's sovereign debt rating next year in the absence of substantial, quality reforms, it said on Monday, days after the government's budget slowed the pace of fiscal consolidation. India needs to at least strengthen two of its macroeconomic metrics on growth, inflation and fiscal health, said Kim Eng Tan, Senior Director, Asia-Pacific Sovereign Ratings for Standard & Poor's. "However, again, (a) very big

'Privatisation' makes comeback after 10 yrs

The Narendra Modi government has revived the idea of strategic disinvestment first proposed by the predecessor National Democratic Alliance (1999-2004) as a major component of non-tax revenues in Budget 2015-16. Together with proceeds from auctions of telecom spectrum and licence fees, the government hopes to garner Rs 1,12,365 crore from these two sources as part of the effort to bridge the fiscal deficit in 2015-16. Strategic disinvestment - or the sale of the government's majority shareholding in select companies - is expected to be a major element of non-tax revenue in addition to incremental stake sales in public sector units (PSUs).

Business Standard - 01.03.2015

http://www.business-standard.com/budget/article/privatisation-makes-comeback-after-10-yrs-115030100016_1.html

Highlights of the Finance Commission report: 42 percent of resources to go to states

The NDA government today (24 February) tabled the report of the Fourteenth Finance Commission headed by YV Reddy, former Governor of the Reserve Bank. The main highlights of the report, laid out in the Lok Sabha, are a greater devolution of financial resources to the states. The Union Budget for 2015-16, to be presented in parliament on 28 February, is expected to incorporate many of the details of the Commission's recommendations.

First Post - 25.02.2015

<http://www.firstpost.com/business/centre-accepts-finance-commission-report-42-percent-of-resources-to-go-to-states-2118259.html>

FinCom divestment suggestions difficult, say experts

The suggestions include winding up of the National Investment Fund and putting stake sale proceeds into the Consolidated Fund of India, dispensing part of the disinvestment proceeds to states and the need for the Centre to buy back stake in 'high priority' CPSEs. Finance Minister Arun Jaitley has said the government has taken up these recommendations for consideration. The biggest point of contention is likely to be the

improvement is unlikely to come through in next year or so... We don't see the rating going up in the next year or so," Tan said.

Business Standard - 02.03.2015

http://www.business-standard.com/article/reuters/budget-shows-commitment-to-keep-fiscal-deficit-low-s-p-115030200083_1.html

ONGC most profitable CPSE, BSNL biggest loss-making

The number of people working in central public sector enterprises declined further in 2013-14, while state-run oil explorer ONGC was the most profitable PSU in the fiscal, a government survey said. As on March 31, 2014, 290 CPSEs employed over 13.51 lakh people (excluding contract workers), compared to 14.02 lakh in 2012-13. "The total strength of CPSEs has gone down by 50,213 persons due to superannuation, voluntary retirement etc," said the Public Enterprises Survey tabled in Parliament today. Among the top performing central public sector enterprises (CPSEs), ONGC incurred a net profit of Rs 22,094.81 crore, followed by Coal India (Rs 15,008 crore), NTPC (Rs 10,975 crore); Indian Oil Corporation (Rs 7,019 crore), NMDC Ltd (Rs 6,420 crore); Power Finance Corporation (Rs 5,418 crore). Telecom major BSNL remained the biggest loss-making enterprise during 2013-14 as well with losses mounting to over Rs 7,019 crore.

The Economic Times - 26.02.2015

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2015-02-26/news/59541969_1_power-grid-corporation-state-trading-corporation-electrification-corporation

ONGC director Shashi Shankar suspended by oil ministry

The oil ministry has suspended ONGC director (Technical) Shashi Shankar over allegations of irregularities. The ministry on Monday wrote to Oil and Natural Gas Corp. Ltd that a disciplinary proceeding against Shankar is being contemplated. "The competent authority in exercise of the powers conferred under ONGC Conduct, Discipline and Appeal Rules, 1994, has placed Shashi Shankar, director (technical and field services) ONGC, under suspension with immediate effect," the company said in a regulatory filing. Shankar, who turns 54 on Monday, is the youngest director on the board of the nation's most profitable oil company. He was appointed director (technical and field services) on 1 February last year. While the exact reason for the move is not yet clear, sources said there were allegations of tender irregularities, which the vigilance department is now probing.

one on states getting a part of divestment proceeds.

Business Standard - 26.02.2015

http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/fincom-divestment-suggestions-difficult-say-experts-115022501198_1.html

Kelkar panel report on oil sector reforms: 'Link gas price to market'

Ahead of Union Budget 2015-16, the petroleum ministry has made public a key report on oil sector reforms by a panel under former Finance Secretary Vijay Kelkar. If implemented, these could bring down the country's annual \$150-billion oil import bill by at least \$40 billion. Among the 51 recommendations are implementing market-linked pricing of natural gas after the end of the current Plan period (March 2017), contract extension up to the economic life of the blocks, revamping bidding parameters under the New Exploration Licensing Policy and allowing the private sector to develop shale reserves in nominated blocks. "The fair price for gas can only be the best price a gas molecule commands or the price that is market-determined in a transparent way, on an arm's length basis.

Business Standard - 24.02.2015

http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/kelkar-panel-report-on-oil-sector-reforms-link-gas-price-to-market-115022400028_1.html

Private firms to wait for PSU lead in capex plans

Despite a number of global and domestic factors aiding in bringing back confidence in the future growth prospects of the Indian economy, the country's largest companies are going to wait further before kick starting their capital investment cycles once again, a report by credit rating agency Crisil released on Tuesday shows. Capital investments by private sector companies is likely to decline by 11% in 2015-16, while those of public sector firms is estimated to increase by a marginal 3%. It appears that Indian companies will wait for the measures being initiated by the government to take effect on the ground before committing fresh investments towards capital creation. Within this universe of companies, the private sector enterprises say that they will wait for their public sector counterparts to take the lead in restarting their capital expenditure

Mint - 24.02.2015

<http://www.livemint.com/Companies/RRhIUfdSB5bLdEqurBcyQK/ONGC-director-Shashi-Shankar-suspended-over-allegations-of-i.html>

Infra growth higher than industrial growth since FY12, says Eco Survey

The Index of Industrial production (IIP) suggests that industrial sector is recovering slowly with a 2.1 per cent in April - December 2014-15 over the 0.1 per cent in the same period last year. The Economic Survey presented by the Finance Minister Sh. Arun Jaitely in the Lok Sabha says that the recovery is led by the infrastructure sectors namely electricity, coal and cement. Mining sector growth has turned positive while manufacturing growth continues to remain tepid, registering growth of 1.2 % in April - December 2014-15. The Survey observes that the low growth in manufacturing is mainly due to high rate of interest, infrastructure bottlenecks, and low domestic and external demand.

India Infoline - 27.02.2015

http://www.indiainfoline.com/article/news-top-story/infra-growth-higher-than-industrial-growth-since-fy12-says-eco-survey-115022700252_1.html

Govt asks ministries to upload recruitment rules on websites

All central government ministries have been asked to upload notified recruitment rules on their websites to ensure greater transparency. The move comes after it was noticed that ministries or departments are not uploading these rules for various posts on their official websites. "To bring greater transparency and allow the prospective government employees to make an informed decision regarding their career prospects, all the ministries or departments are requested to upload the notified recruitment rules of various posts under their ministry or department by March 15, 2015," said an order issued by the Department of Personnel and Training. They were also advised to issue suitable instructions to the subordinate offices and attached offices under their administrative control for uploading these rules. All the ministries or departments were asked to report on the compliance with these instructions before March 31.

The Indian Express - 01.03.2015

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/government-asks-ministries-to-upload-recruitment-rules-on-websites/>

programmes, before following suit.

The Financial Express - 25.02.2015

<http://www.financialexpress.com/article/industry/companies/private-firms-to-wait-for-psu-lead-in-capex-plans/47078/>

Economic Survey 2015: CAD to fall to 1% of GDP in the next year

The Economic Survey for the year 2014-2015 sees the Current Account Deficit (CAD) falling to 1% of the GDP in the coming fiscal year. The Survey was tabled in the Parliament on Friday. The Economic Survey expects the Indian economy to grow at over 8 percent for the coming fiscal year. Earlier this month, RBI said that the current account deficit is estimated to come down to 1.3 per cent of GDP in the fiscal ending March, helped by moderation in petroleum and gold imports. The CAD, was 1.7 per cent of GDP (\$32.4 billion) in 2013-14. It was at a record high of 4.7 per cent (\$88 billion) in 2012-13.

The Economic Times - 27.02.2015

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/finance/economic-survey-2015-cad-to-fall-to-1-of-gdp-in-the-next-year/articleshow/46392982.cms>

No private emails for gov't's official communications

Government personnel have been barred from using private e-mail services for official communications. "Users shall refrain from using private e-mail servers from government network. E-mail service authorised by the government and implemented by the IA (Implementing Agency under this policy is NIC) shall only be used for all official correspondence," said the policy on use of IT resources notified last week.

The new policy also bars officials from using forward option in e-mails to non-government e-mail services. "The e-mail services provided by other service providers shall not be used for any official communication," the notification said. This policy is applicable to all employees of central government and employees of those state or union territories governments that use the e-mail services of provided by central government.

The Indian Express - 01.03.2015

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/no-private-emails-for-govts-official-communications/>

Govt targets Rs1 trillion in dividend collection next fiscal

The government aims to collect over Rs.1 trillion in dividend from public sector companies and banks in 2015-16, a 13% increase over current year. The government will collect Rs.88,781 crore on account of dividends in the current fiscal, the budget document shows.

All profit-making central public sector enterprises (CPSEs) are required to declare a minimum dividend on equity of 20% or a minimum dividend payout of 20% of post-tax profit, whichever is higher, subject to availability of disposable profits. In the case of PSUs with large disposable profits or healthy cash reserves, a higher or special dividend may also be considered. Of the Rs.1,00,651 crore budgeted from dividends, Rs.36,174 crore is estimated to come from CPSEs and Rs.64,477 crore from banks, financial institutions and Reserve Bank of India (RBI). For the current fiscal, however, the dividend income of Rs.88,781 crore as per the revised estimates has been lower than the budgeted Rs.90,229 crore.

Mint - 01.03.2015

<http://www.livemint.com/Politics/WQevIw5vHu8jVB1RoVWTIM/Govt-targets-Rs1-trillion-in-dividend-collection-next-fiscal.html>

President Pranab Mukherjee says new tourism policy on anvil

President Pranab Mukherjee Monday said that there was enormous potential in the tourism sector and the government will bring out a new tourism policy. "A new tourism policy is on the anvil," Mukherjee said in his address to the members of two houses of parliament at the start of the budget session. He said that tourist visa on arrival facility has been expanded to 44 countries. He said infrastructure facilities were being improved at tourist destinations and dedicated trains had been started for some pilgrimage destinations.

The Economic Times - 23.02.2015

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/president-pranab-mukherjee-says-new-tourism-policy-on-anvil/articleshow/46340543.cms>

Government plans to set up expert panel to improve Air India's performance

The government plans to set up an expert panel to find ways to improve Air India's performance but presently no proposal is being considered for

Rail Budget: Overhaul freight charging system to make it more profitable

Chartered accountant Suresh Prabhu has many advantages over previous railway ministers. The most important one being he does not have to satisfy the demands of state or a constituency. In the past, the portfolio of railways was given to alliance parties who would use its vast budget to announce populist schemes, ensure jobs for vested interests and investment. None of the railway ministers saw the potential of the organisation as an infrastructure owner and its role in driving the economy of a country. The railways has the potential to drive the economy by making it possible for businesses to get their products to consumers, raw materials to the factories and moving people in a cost-effective manner. To move people in a cost-effective manner means not making losses or profits. This should be the stated goal particularly for commutes up to 100 kms. This does not mean the metro but the intra-city commute. For tourism, the services should be better and should target profits on a seasonal basis. The railways has already started a variable pricing option in this regard.

First Post - 24.02.2015

<http://www.firstpost.com/business/rail-budget-overhaul-freight-charging-system-to-make-it-more-profitable-2118051.html>

No proposal to privatise airports, says Govt.

The government today said it has initiated the process of developing four airports through public private partnership mode but there was no move to privatise them as of now. "There is no such proposal of privatisation of airports at present," Minister of State for Civil Aviation Mahesh Sharma told the Rajya Sabha in a written reply. He was responding to a query on whether the government is considering a proposal to privatise Chennai, Kolkata, Ahmedabad and Jaipur airports. However, he said the government has initiated the process for developing these four airports through PPPs.

Business Standard - 24.02.2015

http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/no-proposal-to-privatise-airports-says-govt-115022400817_1.html

E-visa gives fillip to tourism sector: Economic Survey

Easing of the Indian tourism visa regime through the expansion of Visa on Arrival enabled by Electronic Travel Authorization

its privatisation, Civil Aviation Minister Ashok Gajapathi Raju Pusapati said today. "Setting up of an expert committee to suggest ways to further improve the performance of Air India is under consideration," he said. In April 2012, the government had approved a turnaround as well as financial restructuring plans for the carrier. Under these plans, there would be an equity infusion of Rs 30,231 crore up to 2012 provided the airline meets certain milestones. "Air India has considerably improved its financial and operational performance," the Minister said in a written reply to the Rajya Sabha.

The Economic Times - 24.02.2015

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/transportation/airlines/-aviation/government-plans-to-set-up-expert-panel-to-improve-air-indias-performance/articleshow/46355728.cms>

Visa on arrival a game-changer for tourism industry

Finance minister Arun Jaitley's proposal in the budget to extend the visa on arrival facility to 150 countries from 43 at present in a phased manner is set to increase the tourist inflow and benefit the local industry manifold, experts said. Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) in 2014 reported a growth of 7.1% to 74.62 lakh compared with FTAs of 69.68 lakh in 2013, which was, in turn, a growth of 5.9% in 2012. Peter Kerkar, director, Cox & Kings, said, "The extension of electronic travel authorisation (e-visas) to 150 more countries is a positive step for tourism as this sector contributes 7% of India's GDP and helped create more than 40 million jobs last year." Hari Nair, founder & CEO, HolidayIQ.com, a travel portal, said, "Visa on arrival being extended to 150 countries is a huge step for Indian tourism. In addition, tourism is a sector that is a beneficiary of improvements across multiple areas."

DNA - 02.03.2015

<http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-visa-on-arrival-a-game-changer-for-tourism-2065412>

Air travel gets expensive with service tax changes

Air travel will be costlier with the government increasing the service tax rate and withdrawing service tax exemption for construction of greenfield airports. Business class fares will go up 3.3% with finance minister Arun Jaitley announcing a reduction in abatement in service tax on business class and first class fares from 60% to 40%. Consequently, service tax would be payable on 60% of the value of fare for business class. This is in addition to increase in tax rate from 12.36% to 14%. The change in tax rate will impact economy class fares too which would go up

(ETA) will give a fillip to foreign tourist arrivals in the country, the Economic Survey for 2014-15 said here Friday. "There was an increase in growth on both foreign tourist arrivals at 7.1 percent and foreign exchange earnings at 6.6 percent in the year 2014," the survey, which was tabled by Finance Minister Arun Jaitley in the Lok Sabha, said. "However, India's share of world tourism is a paltry 0.6 percent of international tourist arrivals compared to 7.8 percent in France and 6.4 percent in the US," it added. India now allows e-visa for 42 countries.

Business Standard - 27.02.2015

http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/e-visa-gives-fillip-to-tourism-sector-economic-survey-115022700540_1.html

ATF price hiked by 8.2 per cent; non-subsidised LPG to cost Rs 5 more

Jet fuel price was today hiked by a steep 8.2 per cent while the rates of non-subsidised LPG was increased by Rs 5 per cylinder on firming international oil rates. The price of aviation turbine fuel (ATF), or jet fuel, in Delhi was hiked by Rs 3,849.97 per kilolitre, or 8.2 per cent, to Rs 50,363 per kl, oil companies announced today. The rate hike follows seven consecutive monthly cuts since August, the last being by 11.27 per cent (Rs 5,909.9 per kl) from February 1. Prior to today's increase, ATF price had been cut by Rs 23,648.73 or 33 per cent in seven reductions since August 2014. Even after today's hike, jet fuel rates are lowest since February 2011.

The Economic Times - 01.03.2015

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/atf-price-hiked-by-8-2-per-cent-non-subsidised-lpg-to-cost-rs-5-more/articleshow/46419649.cms>

Railways to set up new PSU for logistics solution

The government is planning to set up a public sector unit (PSU) called Transport Logistics Corp. of India to develop common user facilities with handling as well as value-added services for the storage and movement of goods at select railway terminals. The company, which will provide end-to-end logistics solution, is in addition to existing rail PSU Container Corp of India Ltd (Concor) that offers container trains services. The company will be run as a public-private partnership. The announcement was made by Union railways

by 0.6%. As per a rough estimate the increase in business class fare would be little than Rs. 1000 on an average business class fare between Mumbai and Delhi, an airline executive said.

Business Standard - 01.03.2015

http://www.business-standard.com/budget/article/air-travel-gets-expensive-with-service-tax-changes-115030100547_1.html

All Above Board | Govt to simplify multi-modal transport operations, trade practices

India's shipping ministry is weighing a plan to free the so-called multi-modal transport operators (MTOs)—those who move goods by different modes such as road, rail, inland waterways, sea and air—from the regulatory control of mandatory registration and bring them under self-regulation in a bid to simplify and rationalize procedures and impart transparency. India has some 1,305 registered MTOs, accounting for hardly about 10% of the total such operators in the country. Around 90% of MTOs are not registered although it is mandatory under the Multi Modal Transportation of Goods Act, 1993, (MMTG Act) mainly because there is no incentive for encouraging voluntary registration. Several MTOs operate without a registration as there is no disincentive/punitive action or deterrence available in law against those doing so. In its current form, the provision of registration of MTOs has not served its purpose, a committee led by India's director general of shipping wrote in a report submitted to the ministry in January.

Mint - 26.02.2015

<http://www.livemint.com/Opinion/wzZBtK3Uy44j9f2VZZ3VVO/All-Above-Board--Govt-to-simplify-multimodal-transport-ope.html>

Railway Budget 2015: Freight rates to be hiked from April 1, consumers will pay for costlier grain

Suresh Prabhu, while sparing passengers in his rail budget, has proposed a hike in freight rates that will directly impact consumers of essential commodities and steel and aluminium industries. The railway minister has proposed a freight hike of 0.8% on iron ore and steel, a 6.3% increase on coal movement and an increase in freight rate for grains and pulses by 10% in fiscal 2015-16 that begins in April. Pulses manufacturers said retail costs could increase Rs 1-2 a kg across the board;

minister Suresh Prabhu while presenting the railway budget for 2015-16 on Thursday. Prabhu said Indian Railways must expand its freight-handling capacity in tandem with the expansion of freight-carrying network capacity. "In the initial period, it has been proposed to upgrade 10 existing goods sheds of Indian railways and develop 30 small multi-modal logistic parks where Indian railways has surplus land," he said.

Mint - 26.02.2015

<http://www.livemint.com/Politics/UX6HimIjV3qUCrHvdXhabN/Indian-Railways-to-set-up-new-company-for-endtoend-logisti.html>

Dry Ports

Interaction with the concerned stakeholders including the Shipping industry and resolving the issues raised by them is an ongoing process. In consultation with the stakeholders' necessary modification in the Tariff Guidelines are made from time to time to promote the development of the Port sector. To allow the competitive market forces to play a greater role in determination of tariff at Major Port Trusts, the Government have issued two new policy guidelines viz. Guidelines for Determination of Tariff for Projects at Major Ports, 2013 and Guidelines for Determination of Tariff for Major Port Trusts, 2015. These guidelines impart flexibility to the PPP operators in the Major Ports and Major Ports owned terminals in determining their tariff, subject to a ceiling rate. In order to make the shipping industry more attractive and competitive, Indian shipping industry has been provided cargo support.

Business Standard - 26.02.2015

http://www.business-standard.com/article/government-press-release/dry-ports-115022600729_1.html

Railway Budget 2015: Logistics sector gets a boost

The logistics sector is set to get a boost with the Railway Budget emphasising on augmenting freight handling capacity through a slew of measures. Increasing the speed in nine railway corridors will help reduce logistics lead time, which will ultimately benefit industry, according to experts. "Announcements like Transport Development Corporation and multi-modal depots are bound to improve the delivery capability. However, the budget has not addressed the main concern of 'logistics

by 50 paise to Re 1 a kg in rice and wheat. Prices of coarse grain like corn, barley, jowar could also grow. However, with domestic steel demand yet to pick up, and a very real threat of imports, most major companies are likely to absorb the hike.

The Economic Times - 26.02.2015

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/transportation/railways/railway-budget-2015-freight-rates-to-be-hiked-from-april-1-consumers-will-pay-for-costlier-grain/articleshow/46381116.cms>

Railway freight traffic is more price-sensitive

A day after freight rates were increased on select commodities and passenger fares left unchanged in the railway budget, the Economic Survey for 2014-15 said freight traffic is more sensitive to price changes than passenger traffic. It also said there is potential for price discrimination among different class of passenger and freight types. The Railways has been using hike in freight rates as a tool to cross subsidise the passenger fares, thereby, losing share to other modes of transport. The Survey document, citing reports, said the share of the Railways in freight traffic will come down to 25 per cent by 2020, from 33 per cent in 2011-2012. The Survey used the principle of elasticity of demand or in other words demand sensitivity to price changes to demonstrate the differences in various types of passenger and freight traffic. The metric showed freight traffic at 55.4 per cent was more sensitive to price changes when compared to passenger traffic (at 14.4 per cent).

The Hindu - 28.02.2015

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/budget/railway-freight-traffic-is-more-pricesensitive/article6941951.ece>

Demand for tech innovators to go up in Indian logistics industry

The Indian e-commerce boom is leading to an increased competition within the logistics industry. To build a strong competitive edge, logistics companies are set to bring on-board Innovation Managers and Tech Evangelists. In an exclusive interaction Anjani Kumar, CIO, Safexpress tells us about this and more...Today, many Indian e-commerce companies such as Snapdeal and Flipkart, have their own in-house logistics networks. But in the near future, as the competition intensifies among the e-commerce businesses, many of them may look at outsourcing this function to logistics companies to shorten the delivery time and reach out to the Tier 2 and 3 cities also. In a recent interaction, Anjani Kumar, CIO, Safexpress talked about why the

cost' that will continue to remain high," said S. V. Sukumar, Partner, KPMG in India. The logistics industry has welcomed many of the announcements made by Railways Minister Suresh Prabhu.

The Hindu - 26.02.2015

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/budget/railway-budget-logistics-sector-gets-a-boost/article6937787.ece>

Corporate tag to help ports cash in on land bank

The budget proposal to turn the country's major ports into companies may be a shot in the arm for land-rich ports such as the Calcutta Port Trust (CPT). Port veterans said the CPT could be a major beneficiary if it became a company as it would get plenty of operational freedom, such as in land use. At present, the Major Ports Trust Act of 1963, which governs 12 state-run ports in the country, does not allow them to lease excess land for non-port use. "As a corporate, the CPT can take decisions on leasing out land for non-port purpose, which may fetch more revenue for the cash-strapped institution," a senior port official said. The CPT has around 7,000 acres in Calcutta and 4,000 acres in Haldia. Some of its land in Calcutta are in prime locations that may fetch a good return if used for a non-port purpose. According to a conservative estimate, the CPT may be able to lease out as much as 500 acres of prime land in Calcutta.

The Telegraph - 02.03.2015

http://www.telegraphindia.com/1150302/jsp/business/story_6376.jsp#.VPQDWHyUdUV

Embracing smart warehousing

Indian economy continues to grow multi-fold and so does the challenges that it beholds. As compared to the situation in the last decade, this industry has come a long way in improving the intralogistic practices and we witnessed the same in 2014. This reflects in the phenomena of embracing the concept of smart warehousing through implementation of automation, verticalisation and lean design supported by the MHE industry. The present market size of MHE industry in India is growing annually at 10 per cent. Of course some aspects will remain in the forthcoming years as they are today; volatility in supply and demand will continue to bring in the element of risk management, the urge to deliver "more with less" will continue to drive the focus of the players in the growing

logistics industry is now becoming more competitive than ever. "With e-commerce booming like never before, the volume of shipments is increasing dramatically, as we speak. Added to this, with increasing competition among e-commerce players, the focus would be on delivery of products within the shortest possible time," said Anjani.

The Economic Times - 26.02.2015

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/jobs/demand-for-tech-innovators-to-go-up-in-indian-logistics-industry/articleshow/46394353.cms>

Indian exporters opt for French port

Relative cost and time advantages are drawing Indian exporters to the French port complex of Haropa for European markets. Indian companies such as Reliance Industries, Tata Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra, Dhunseri Petrochemicals and Electrosteel Castings have been using the three-port system, said Herve Cornede, Commercial and Marketing Director of Grand Port Maritime Du Havre. Cornede claimed that Haropa port system was 30 per cent cheaper for Indian exports than its competitors in Europe were. From Nhava-Sheva and Kolkata to Le Havre an exporter can gain between three and seven days compared to Antwerp and Rotterdam and from Le Havre to Indian ports, between one and three days. Currently on a road show in India, officials of Haropa, its allied services organisations and French customs, also made a pitch for cost effective idea for Indian exporters to ship goods to French-speaking West African destinations through its logistic and distribution hub.

The Hindu Business Line - 26.02.2015

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/industry-and-economy/logistics/indian-exporters-opt-for-french-port/article6937748.ece>

NTPC CGM Shri Thangapandian selected as Director (Power), NLC

PSEB has recommended the name Shri V Thangapandian, GGM, NTPC, for the post of Director (Power), Neyveli Lignite Corporation Limited at a PESB meeting held on February 23, 2015.

PSEB - 24.02.2015

<http://www.indiapublicsector.com/p/top-appointments.html>

field of intralogistics, skill gaps and business pressure forcing adoption of methods to increase efficiency and balance customisation with consolidation.

Express Pharma - 26.02.2015

<http://www.financialexpress.com/article/pharma/pharma-ally/embracing-smart-warehousing/48004/>

13 Joint Secretaries Shifted In Mid-Level Bureaucratic Reshuffle

As many as 13 Joint Secretary level officers have been appointed to various ministries as part of mid-level bureaucratic reshuffle effected by the central government. Debashri Mukherjee, a 1991 IAS officer of Union territories cadre, has been appointed as Joint Secretary in Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT). She has been appointed in place of M Devaraj, 1996 batch IAS officer of Uttar Pradesh cadre, who has been earlier shifted to Cabinet Secretariat. IAS officer Rajiv Ranjan Mishra has been appointed as Joint Secretary in Department of Housing and Poverty Alleviation. T V S N Prasad has been appointed in Mishra's place as Joint Secretary and Mission Director, National Mission for Clean Ganga. B Rajendar, a 1995 batch IAS officer of Bihar cadre, has been appointed as JS in Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, an order issued by the DoPT.

The Sen Times - 24.02.2015

<http://www.tkbsen.in/2015/02/13-joint-secretaries-shifted-in-mid-level-bureaucratic-reshuffle/>

Ms S T Ray selected as Director (HRD), BSNL

Ms S T Ray, ED, BSNL, has been selected for the post of Director (HRD), Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) at a Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB) meeting held on February 27, 2015.

Whispers in the Corridors - 27.02.2015

http://www.whispersinthecorridors.com/print_today.html