

(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

The Financial Express
15.07.2015

Indronil Roychowdhury

BALMER Lawrie, a mini-ratna PSU under the ministry of oil and natural gas, is betting big on its lubricant business that brings a fifth of its revenues. A pan-India brand building drive is on for its Balmerol range of lubricants. Balmerol has now got a trendy logo and design. The re-branding is in line with the company's goal of remaining as India's largest grease manufacturer, while emerging as a globally competitive, transnational lubricants solution and service provider, said Viren Sinha, chairman and managing director.

"The automotive retail business will continue to be the focus area, which will drive growth and profitability. The shift will be from the industrial segment to the retail automotive segment," Sinha said, adding the company was trying to rebuild the brand for the last three years. The share of lubricants in the PSU's top line could rise beyond the 20% level in the days to come, an official said.

Balmer Lawrie, founded by two Scotsmen, George Stephen Balmer and Alexander Lawrie, is a much diversified player. There is hardly any business the company has not got into over the years. From tea to shipping, insurance, banking, trading to manufacturing, Balmer Lawrie has done it all. Today the PSU calls itself as a multi-activity, multi-technology, and multi-location conglomerate having global footprints, with seven joint ventures—Balmer Lawrie Van Leer, Balmer Lawrie UAE, AVI-OIL India Private Ltd, Transafe Services Ltd, Balmer Lawrie Indonesia (PTBL), Balmer Lawrie Hind Terminals and Balmer Lawrie UK Ltd. These compa-



“The automotive retail business will continue to be the focus area, which will drive growth and profitability. The shift will be from the industrial segment to the retail automotive segment.”

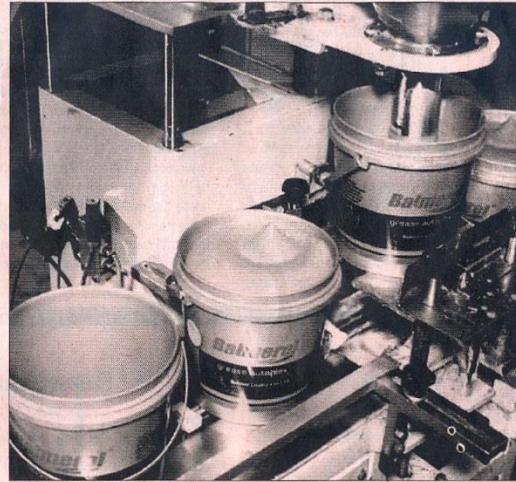
VIREN SINHA,
CMD, Balmer Lawrie

nies encompass a diverse set of interests in manufacturing and services. In effect, Balmer Lawrie is into sectors like industrial packaging, grease & lubricants, leather chemicals, travel & tours, logistics infrastructure services and refinery & oilfield services.

Until September 2013, Balmer Lawrie UK Ltd (BLUK), a wholly owned subsidiary of Balmer Lawrie & Co Ltd, was into tea warehousing, blending and packaging, besides be-

Riding on lubes

Company to focus on automotive retail business to drive growth



holding of 18%, financial institutions and insurance companies collectively hold about 20% of the capital.

The company is now the largest manufacturer of steel barrels, freight containers, fat liquor and greases & lubricants. Globally the company is also among the top ten grease manufacturers and exports significant quantities to other countries. Its grease products include, Balmerol Industrial, Balmerol Speciality Grease and Balmerol Automotive.

Balmer Lawrie recently launched the new Tech Tonic packs for diesel engine oils and 4T oils for the automotive sector. The company, which has a 2% market share in the lubricant space, aims at doubling it in the next five years, Sinha said.

The company reported a near 2% year-on-year increase in net profit at ₹45.63 crore for the first quarter this fiscal. It reported 13% y-o-y jump in sales to ₹683 crore. But net profit in FY15 declined 5.59% to ₹147.44 crore, though sales rose 4.07% y-o-y to ₹2,708 crore. The company reported the highest net income of ₹2,843 crore in FY14 despite a global slowdown.

The company is rapidly expanding the distribution network in both the industrial and automotive retail segment in focused markets. It is also in midst of enhancing and modernising its manufacturing facilities in Kolkata, Chennai, Mumbai and Silvassa.

The PSU will invest between ₹500 and ₹1,000 crore in the next three years, an official said. The investment plan for this fiscal is ₹100-150 crore, mostly for enhancing facility, and has already invested ₹500 crore over the past three years for system and product up gradation.

ing into hiring marine freight containers. But it exited these businesses, and the proceeds are being used to fund other business opportunities. BLUK, according to officials, has invested in Balmer Lawrie Indonesia (PTBL) and has taken up 50% of the paid up equity capital in the joint venture, formed to manufacture and market greases and lubricants in Indonesia. Tea, according to Sinha, was a perennially loss-making ven-

ture and its turnover never surpassed ₹3 crore a year.

Looking back to history, Balmer Lawrie became a private limited company in 1924 and a public limited company in 1936. In 1972, it became a subsidiary of Indo Burma Petroleum (IBP) Co. Ltd. and a government of India Company. IBP, by a scheme of arrangement transferred their 61.8% holding to Balmer Lawrie Investments Limited in 2001. Besides public

The Telegraph
Tuesday, 14 July 2015

Happenings

Balmer Lawrie inaugurates toilets for two Kolkata based schools under 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan'

Taking forward the national campaign 'Swachh Bharat: Swachh Vidyalaya Abhiyan', Balmer Lawrie & Co. Ltd. took up the construction of toilets for Charan Kabi Mukund Das Jr. High School and Mukundpur and Mollarhat Junior High School, Tollygunge in Kolkata. Ms. Manjusha Bhatnagar, Director [HR&CA] inaugurated the toilets amidst school authorities and students.

Keeping competitive neutrality

Competitive neutrality is important in an economy where critical infrastructure and service sectors are dominated by the public sector. In India, even after 24 years of liberalisation, sectors like airports, banking, insurance, mining, power, ports, postal system, railways, shipping, etc. remain largely under the public sector. Moreover, it appears that the government is now relying more on the public sector to push its developmental and other agendas, as the private sector has turned a hesitant investor, preferring to wait and watch than opening up the cash chests. Competitive neutrality becomes a concern when the role of the public sector enlarges in the economy. Competitive neutrality implies that no business entity is advantaged (or disadvantaged) solely because of its ownership. An OECD working paper, titled Competitive Neutrality and State-Owned Enterprises: Challenges and Policy Options, deals with the issue at length. It is tempting for governments to depart from competitive neutrality, since public sector enterprises are viewed as an extended government arm and are expected to behave differently from private entities.

The Financial Express - 15.07.2015

<http://www.financialexpress.com/article/economy/keeping-competitive-neutrality/101129/>

Disinvestment in 10 PSUs to Depend on Market, Says Government

The proposed stake sale in PSUs, which could potentially fetch Rs 20,000 crore to the country's exchequer, would actually depend on market conditions, according to the government. The Department of Disinvestment (DoD) is in the process of appointing merchant bankers for stake sale in 10 state-owned companies - Oil India, Container Corp, NMDC, MMTTC, ITDA, NTPC, Engineers India, BEL, Nalco and Hindustan Copper. "The market and other related conditions will determine transaction completion time," DoD told merchant bankers to their query whether all the transactions would be completed in three years. It added that the government sought to appoint for a period up to three years qualified merchant bankers for advising it, to disinvest a part of the paid up equity share capital in each of the public sector companies, through the 'Offer for Sale' of shares by promoters. The 10 companies have been divided into two baskets. DoD had earlier this month issued two RFPs for selecting merchant bankers. The ones selected will handle five disinvestments at one go, the divestment department said while inviting proposals from bankers.

Using disinvestment for growth

The government has mobilized Rs.1,610 crore through disinvestment so far this financial year. It appears that the stake sales will once again be back ended, though the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has given approval for disinvestment in several large public sector companies. For the current year, the government has set an ambitious target of raising Rs.69,500 crore through disinvestment. Out of the total targeted revenue mobilization through disinvestments, it is expecting to raise Rs.28,500 crore by way of strategic sale, while the rest (Rs.41,000 crore) will come through minority stake sale. However, in recent years, the government has fallen short of the target for a variety of reasons and the same story was repeated last fiscal, though the mobilization was the highest ever. But markets will be hoping that this year will be different for various reasons. For one, attainment of such a big target itself will send a positive signal to the market.

Mint - 15.07.2015

<http://www.livemint.com/Money/VN8ZJ7OkpyMEBEns19YQI/Using-disinvestment-for-growth.html>

China may tip world into recession: Morgan Stanley

Forget about all the shoes, toys and other exports. China may soon have another thing to offer the world: a recession. That is the prediction from Ruchir Sharma, head of emerging markets at Morgan Stanley Investment Management, who says a continuation of China's slowdown in the next years may drag global economic growth below 2 per cent, a threshold he views as equivalent to a world recession. It would be the first global slump over the past 50 years without the US contracting. "The next global recession will be made by China," Sharma, who manages more than \$25 billion, said in an interview at Bloomberg's headquarters in New York. "Over the next couple of years, China is likely to be the biggest source of vulnerability for the global economy." While China's growth is slowing, the country's influence has increased as it became the world's second-largest economy. China accounted for 38 per cent of the global growth last year, up from 23 per cent in 2010, according to Morgan Stanley.

The Economic Times - 15.07.2015

The New Indian Express - 20.07.2015

<http://www.newindianexpress.com/business/news/Disinvestment-in-10-PSUs-to-Depend-on-Market-Says-Government/2015/07/20/article2929572.ece>

Indian exports face more competition

In 2011-12, the first full fiscal in which Iran faced sanctions and restrictions on dollar-denominated trade, India's exports to the Gulf nation was estimated at \$2.4 billion. In three years, it more than doubled to almost \$5 billion following government's special efforts to tap into the market, which resulted in cereal exports alone nearing the \$2 billion mark. While basmati exports are estimated at over \$1 billion, shipments of iron and steel, chemicals, machinery, vehicles and tea too soared against the backdrop of sanctions. By the end of the last fiscal, as the West started negotiations to remove the sanctions, exports had begun to come off the peaks seen just a year ago. With the sanctions gone, exporters now see the market shrinking in the coming months as other sources open for trade especially as the government's efforts to push auto components and pharmaceuticals into Iran during the sanctions days did not get the private sector moving. With oil imports too expected to pick up, the trade deficit with Iran which had narrowed too may widen in the coming months. Due to the sanctions, as well as the fall in international crude prices, India's oil imports declined from \$11.8 billion in 2011-12 to \$7.2 billion last year.

The Times of India - 15.07.2015

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/Iran-nuclear-deal-Indian-exports-face-more-competition/articleshow/48075623.cms>

Government sets up Council for Export Promotion

In view of continuous decline in exports over a half-year period, the Indian government has set up a promotion council to be chaired by the union commerce minister and comprising state trade and commerce ministers and other official as members. The Council for Trade Development and Promotion was notified by the ministry earlier this month. "It has been decided to constitute the Council for Trade Development and Promotion in order to ensure a continuous dialogue with state governments and UTs on measures for providing an international trade enabling environment in the states and to create a framework for making the states active partners in boosting India's exports," the notification said. Besides, 14 union secretaries including those of commerce, revenue, shipping, civil aviation, agriculture, food processing and

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/business/china-may-tip-world-into-recession-morgan-stanley/articleshow/48075841.cms>

June exports slide for 7th month, down 15.82%

Merchandise exports in June contracted 15.82 per cent to \$22.28 billion compared to \$26.47 billion in the same month last year. This was for the seventh straight month that shipments from India witnessed a decline mainly on account of weaker demand largely due to crisis in China and Greece. In May, the rate of decline of exports was higher at 20.19 per cent. Total exports in the first quarter of this financial year also plummeted 16.75 per cent to \$66.69 billion compared to \$80.11 billion in the corresponding period last year, according to the trade data released here on Wednesday by the ministry of commerce and industry. Imports in June, on the other hand, were 13.40 per cent lower reaching \$33.11 billion compared to \$38.24 billion. Cumulatively, imports saw a decline of 12.61 per cent at \$9.89 billion as against \$11.31 billion in June last year. Interestingly, for the last couple of months, non-oil imports are also falling continuously. In May and June, non-oil imports declined 2.24 per cent and 1.85 per cent at \$24.76 billion and \$24.90 billion, respectively.

Business Standard - 16.07.2015

http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/merchandise-exports-continue-to-plunge-for-seventh-straight-month-down-16-in-june-115071500945_1.html

Swachh Bharat cess put on backburner

The robust trend in indirect tax receipts has prompted the finance ministry to defer its plan, announced in the Budget in February, to levy a 2% Swachh Bharat cess on all or some of the taxable services. Sources in the government said this levy would be implemented this fiscal only, if the indirect tax receipts exhibit a pronounced fall later in the year and look poised to miss the annual target of Rs 6.46 lakh crore. Revenue collection from the customs duty, excise and service tax has grown 37.4% in the first quarter of this fiscal against the full-year target of 18.8%. The cess was proposed given the need to raise resources for financing cleanliness and preventive healthcare projects. The strong growth rate in the June quarter is partly on account of the increase in excise duty on petrol and diesel, withdrawal of the fiscal

economic affairs will also be members of the council that also aim at achieving the \$900 billion exports target by 2019-20. The council will provide states a platform to express their perspective on trade policy to help them develop and pursue export strategies in line with the national policy and also help the states to be apprised about international developments affecting India's trade potential and opportunities.

The New Indian Express - 19.07.2015

<http://www.newindianexpress.com/business/new/Government-sets-up-Council-for-Export-Promotion/2015/07/19/article2929072.ece>

India's June fuel demand rises 2.83 percent - government

India's annual fuel demand rose 2.83 percent in June but it slowed compared to the previous month as better monsoon and improved power supply crimped demand for fuels, government data showed on Thursday. Local oil product sales, a proxy for domestic oil demand in the world's fourth-largest oil consumer, rose to 14.4 million tonnes in June, data posted on Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC) website showed. PPAC has revised fuel consumption data for May leading to an annual 3.66 percent jump in demand during the month. India's fuel consumption normally softens during the four-month monsoon season to September as rains curb demand from transport, farm and construction sector. Improved rains in June dampened demand for almost all the fuels compared to May. Diesel, which makes up over a third of refined products consumption, registered an annual growth of 2.5 percent in sales in June contrary to an annual decline in May. However, diesel sales at 6.29 million tonnes in the month was lower than that in May as a heavy downpour early last month had lifted the rain surplus to 28 percent, reducing demand from farm and construction sectors.

First Post - 17.07.2015

<http://www.firstpost.com/fwire/indias-june-fuel-demand-rises-2-83-percent-government-reuters-2347018.html>

Iran nuclear deal: A boost for India's oil sector, but with some pain

India can look at several takeaways in the oil sector from Tehran's truce with the west but may find the going tough in acquiring oilfields, while an extended oil glut would keep fuel prices low but hurt domestic producers. The biggest benefit for India would be a lower oil import bill. The deal is expected to pull down global oil prices further and keep them subdued in the near future - at least the second half of 2016 - as Iran looks to double crude exports to over 2 million bpd (barrel per

stimulus given to the automobile and consumer goods sectors and the increase in clean energy cess. Government managers also attribute the trend to a perceived pick-up in industrial activity and consumption. Indirect tax collections had grown a modest 4.3% growth in the June quarter of 2014-15.

The Financial Express - 20.07.2015

<http://www.financialexpress.com/article/economy/swachh-bharat-cess-put-on-backburner/103923/>

Oil & gas producers expected to bear subsidy burden of Rs 5Kcr - Rs 6Kcr in FY16

State-run oil and gas producers are expected to bear a subsidy burden of Rs 5,000 crore-Rs 6,000 crore this fiscal under a new subsidy sharing formula devised by the government, a senior oil ministry official said. Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Oil India, along with the government, compensate fuel retailers for losses they incur on selling cooking gas and kerosene at below-market rates. Under the new formula, the government has decided to provide a subsidy of Rs 12 per litre of kerosene, the official said. Additional compensation needed to sell kerosene at government-set price will be borne by ONGC and Oil India and is estimated to be Rs 5,000 crore - Rs 6,000 crore in FY16 at the current oil price, he said. The fuel retailers sell kerosene today at a loss of about Rs 18 a litre. The government had earlier said it would bear the entire subsidy burden on account of selling liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) at below-market rates.

The Economic Times - 15.07.2015

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2015-07-14/news/64405949_1_fuel-subsidy-lpg-subsidy-oil-india

Cheap oil passes India by as plan to stock crude moves slow

India has squandered most of the opportunity presented by record low oil prices to stock up for the future and left itself vulnerable to possible supply shocks, a whole decade after it first decided to store crude oil for emergency purposes. Gigantic underground caverns cut into rocks in coastal Visakhapatnam will start filling up by the end of July, as the move to store 5.33 million tonnes (mt) of crude oil to last 13 days gets off to a slow start. However, only 1.33 mt

day) in the next six months or so. Iran is estimated to be sitting on a stock of 30 million barrels of crude in ships and on land storage. Cash-strapped Tehran may decide to offload this stock and run with whatever price it gets, even though the global market is oversupplied by 2.6 million bpd. With 80% import dependence, India would have to spend less foreign currency for buying oil if prices crash. This would keep forex reserves healthy and narrow the difference between import and export bills. This is good for the overall economy and the rupee's health.

The Times of India - 16.07.2015

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/Iran-nuclear-deal-A-boost-for-Indias-oil-sector-but-with-some-pain/articleshow/48075583.cms>

Aviation body appeals to exempt international air tickets from service tax

Global airlines body IATA today made an appeal to the government, among others, to exempt international air ticket from service tax, for ease of doing business here, even as the Civil Aviation Ministry said there were different laws and regulations in different countries. "The application of Service Tax should be aligned with a principle that it does not apply to services rendered outside of India including those for overflight charges, global distribution systems, extra baggage fees and international tickets," IATA Director General and CEO, Tony Tyler said. He was delivering a keynote address at the Aviation Day conference organised by International Air Transport Association (IATA), business umbrella body Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) and the Ministry of Civil Aviation here. The conference was attended by a host of senior airlines executives, officials from the Civil Aviation Ministry and Directorate General of Civil Aviation, as well as aviation industry experts

DNA - 15.07.2015

<http://www.dnaindia.com/money/report-aviation-body-appeals-to-exempt-international-air-tickets-from-service-tax-2104716>

Scanner on online air ticket charge

The Centre will examine the "convenience fee" levied by private airlines each time a ticket is booked online, following complaints from fliers. An official of the directorate-general of civil aviation (DGCA) said it would "scan" the fee. "We will study the data provided by all airlines and take a decision on whether any action or regulation is required," the official said. The regulator had recently launched a probe into the private airlines' high cancellation, no-show and rescheduling charges. The government-run Air India does not

of oil can be stored at this facility, which will last just three days. Two more facilities, planned at Mangalore in Karnataka and Padur in Tamil Nadu, are expected to hold the rest. All three reserves, expected to be up and running by October, are part of the first phase of building India's strategic petroleum reserves (SPR). Contrast these figures with reserves of 90 days, held by member countries of the International Energy Agency (IEA), the apex body of oil and gas importing countries, which ensures smoother supplies across the world.

Mint - 20.07.2015

<http://www.livemint.com/Industry/TaPVERYc49YphXAJYe74qL/Cheap-oil-passes-India-by-as-plan-to-stock-crude-moves-slow.html>

Civil Aviation Ministry likely to propose 1% cess on airfares to fund regional air connectivity

According to a report by Mihir Mishra for The Economic Times, flyers should brace for a fare hike, as the Civil Aviation Ministry is likely to propose a one per cent cess on fares to fund air connectivity in non-lucrative regional routes. "The government's focus is to improve regional connectivity in the country and a collection from one per cent cess on tickets will be utilised in funding the losses of operators on loss-making smaller routes," said a Civil Aviation Ministry official. The Ministry will discuss the proposal today. Another source said the government has in-principle accepted the proposal of the cess on fares (excluding taxes) and it will form part of the new Draft Civil Aviation Policy. Assuming India's 60 million domestic passengers pay an estimated average fare of Rs 4,000 per ticket, a one per cent cess would generate about INR 240 crore for the government.

Travel Biz Monitor - 16.07.2015

<http://www.travelbizmonitor.com/Aviation/civil-aviation-ministry-likely-to-propose-1-cess-on-airfares-to-fund-regional-air-connectivity-27902>

Keep maximum fares 2.5-3 times average: Aviation ministry nudges airlines

India's airlines are being gently nudged to desist from "predatory" pricing as the Ministry of Civil Aviation prepares to launch some sort of mechanism to regulate air fares. Sources in the ministry told CNBC-TV18 that the airline CEOs have been told "gently" that air fares should not be exorbitant as the ministry wants airlines to self-regulate instead of imposing a regulation mechanism on them. These sources said though

levy the convenience fee. But others do so, charging Rs 75 to Rs 150 per ticket, and claim it is needed to maintaining online booking services. But Sudhakar Reddy, president of the Air Passengers Association of India, disagreed. "What airlines charge as convenience fee is totally unjustified. It is just a way of fleecing passengers. We've taken up the issue with the DGCA because it relates to unbundling of services," Reddy said. "Unbundling" means breaking down airfares into various components, with separate charges for each.

The Telegraph - 17.07.2015

http://www.telegraphindia.com/1150717/jsp/nation/story_32122.jsp#.Vax5NKSqkq

Government plans to tell airlines not to charge exorbitant rates for last-minute tickets

For years, air travellers in India have paid through their nose for last-minute tickets. But that could soon change. The government plans to tell airlines not to charge exorbitant rates for last-minute tickets. Air India, the bleeding national carrier, will be asked to lower fares to rational levels for last-minute tickets and other airlines will be asked to desist from what the government terms unreasonable hike in ticket prices, civil aviation ministry officials said. Not saying that the fares should not be high...but do not fleece passengers by charging unrealistic fares," a senior official said. "We are getting many complaints. "The official said the ministry will soon call a meeting with airlines on the issue. "We do not want them (airlines) to sell tickets radically cheap early and then charge exorbitant rates at the last minute. It is not fair to charge someone who is travelling due to an emergency."

The Economic Times - 18.07.2015

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/transportation/airlines/-aviation/government-plans-to-tell-airlines-not-to-charge-exorbitant-rates-for-last-minutetickets/articleshow/48119509.cms>

e-visa arrivals register over 10-fold increase

Tourist arrivals in the country under the e-visa facility have witnessed more than 10-fold increase between January and June 2015 compared with the same period last year, the tourism ministry said on Monday. The maximum arrivals were from the United States under the scheme. During January-June 2015, a total of 1,26,214 tourists arrived by availing of e-visa facility compared with just 11,953 during the same period in 2014, the ministry said in a statement here. In June 2015

there is no stated definition of what constitutes exorbitant fares, indications have been given to airlines' top brass that maximum fare on a sector should not exceed 2.5-3 times the average fare. As of now, last minute fares can sometimes be over 10 times the lowest average. Sounds good but how will airlines implement these "gentle" dictats? Minister of State for Civil Aviation Mahesh Sharma has, many times in the past, spoken of fare regulation and indicated that DGCA may be asked to devise a mechanism for regulating air fares.

First Post - 14.07.2015

<http://www.firstpost.com/business/keep-maximum-fares-2-5-3-times-average-aviation-ministry-nudges-airlines-2339956.html>

Most Indian outbound travellers unperturbed by falling rupee: Yatra.com survey

The depreciation of the rupee has not had much impact on the international travel plans of Indians, according to a survey by Yatra.com. Of the 10,000 respondents, more than 60 per cent are eager to travel, unaffected by the dip in the rupee, and continue to pursue their holiday plans. Eighteen per cent of the respondents said they would not wait for the rupee to rise to go on a holiday, 49 per cent said they would take a holiday irrespective of the fall or rise of the rupee, and 33 per cent said they would wait till the rupee stabilises. Sharat Dhall, President, Yatra.com, commented, "The rupee weakening has not really had an adverse impact on Indian travellers as most of them are unfazed and continue to make holiday plans. Savvy Indian travellers' book well in advance these days and hence are confident about getting good deals within their budget."

Travel Biz Monitor - 15.07.2015

<http://www.travelbizmonitor.com/Outbound-News/most-indian-outbound-travellers-unperturbed-by-falling-rupee-yatracom-survey-27892>

Economic slowdown in EU hits ocean freight rates

Ocean freight rates on the India-Europe sector have hit the rock bottom, forcing vessel operators to cut service or reduce sailing frequencies. Shipping agents here say that the economic slowdown in Europe has affected cargo volume on the sector, widening the demand-supply gap in shipping capacity. Added to this was the stagnant export from China and the deployment of larger vessel by some lines. This has led to a situation of "too many ships

itself, a total of 15,557 tourists arrived in the country using the e-visa facility compared with 2,112 during the same month in 2014. "This growth may be attributed to introduction of e-tourist visa for 76 countries as against 12 countries earlier," the statement said. Among the top ten countries whose citizens availed of the facility were: United States (41.71 percent), Australia (9.67 percent), Germany (7.21 percent), Canada (4.86 percent), Korea (4.29 percent), France (3.38 percent), Singapore (2.73 percent) and United Arab Emirates (2.7 percent).

Business Standard - 14.07.2015

http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/e-visa-arrivals-register-over-10-fold-increase-115071301120_1.html

India's port corporatization plan runs aground

The plan to convert 11 of the 12 ports owned by the Indian government into corporate entities from a trustee set-up is being reworked by the shipping ministry, indicating that a long overdue key structural reform of the governance of these harbours, having a combined market share of 57% of the Indian export-import cargo shipped by the sea route, will have to wait much longer. The first indication of a change in plan came when India's shipping minister Nitin Gadkari said on 5 June in Mumbai that the government is looking at alternatives to corporatization. "Finance minister Arun Jaitley had told us (in the budget) about the Companies Act, but we are looking at other alternatives beyond the Companies Act to modernize and upgrade the ports," Gadkari told reporters without giving details of the alternatives being considered. These 11 ports function as trusts under a law framed more than five decades ago called the Major Port Trusts (MPT) Act, 1963. Kamarajar port located at Ennore in Tamil Nadu is the only corporate port owned by the Indian government. Kamarajar Port Ltd was formed as a company under the Companies Act when it was opened in 2001.

Mint - 17.07.2015

<http://www.livemint.com/Opinion/tpsd3SOVIHmJCFOWstOTpI/Indias-port-corporatization-plan-runs-aground.html>

Move afoot to beef up logistics efficiency

In a bid to improve India's road logistics efficiency, the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MoRTH) is implementing a logistics efficiency enhancement programme (LEEP), which aims to support the 'Make in India' initiative through a 'Move in India' drive. As part of this initiative, the MoRTH has invited Expression of Interest (EoI) from companies for providing consulting services

chasing too little cargo". There has been a 60 per cent fall in container rates over the past six months, according to Prakash Iyer, President of Cochin Steamer Agents Association. From \$1,000 per TEU, the rates have come down to \$400 per TEU. The developments in Greece and other Euro zone economies have weakened freight rates and if these extremely uneconomic rates continue, many shipping lines may be forced to wind up operations, he told Business Line.

The Hindu Business Line - 14.07.2015

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/industry-and-economy/logistics/economic-slowdown-in-eu-hits-ocean-freight-rates/article7418047.ece>

India's first private air freight station to open from August 1

Providing relief to the long winding queues of cargo near the airport gateways, Indev Air Freight Station, India's first private air freight station (AFS,) has announced commencement of its operations in Chennai on Friday. Spread over an area of around 20,000 sq.ft near Iringattukottai, the AFS is an extension of the airport or an off-terminal facility where all import formalities can be completed without hassles for cargo transmit. The facility which got license from the customs three years back, but was delayed due to lack of EDI (Electronic Data Interchange) connectivity, is commencing its operation from August 1. "The unit loads or ULDs will be moved directly from aircraft to bonded trucks and those will be moved to the facility where all similar operations to what is available at airport will be provided. The customs officers will be present there round the clock to do the entire formalities, including the online filing, assessment, inspection and delivery," said Xavier Britto, Chairman, Indev AFS.

The Economic Times - 18.07.2015

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/transportation/airlines/-aviation/indias-first-private-air-freight-station-to-open-from-august-1/articleshow/48123530.cms>

Cargo Handling in Indian Ports Rises by 5.4 Percent: ICRA

Credit rating and investment information company ICRA on Monday said during the fiscal year ended March 31, 2015, Indian ports have registered a modest increase in handling cargo by 5.4 percent at 1,043 million tonnes (MT). During 2014-15, 976 MT of cargo was handled by the ports. "The growth was pegged down by

to undertake the LEEP. The Union government has received funds from the World Bank towards the cost of the project called the NHAI Technical Assistance project. A part of this would be used for the consulting assignment. Improvement of logistics is considered crucial to improved trade supply chains, which, in turn, is the backbone of any economy. Although it is an identified key driver of manufacturing growth globally, India's global ranking in terms of the Logistics Performance Index (LPI) — a metric developed by the World Bank — is not very high. The LPI measures and benchmarks nations on their logistic efficiency.

The Hindu - 15.07.2015

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/move-afoot-to-beef-up-logistics-efficiency/article7422149.ece>

Oil Ministry reinstates Shashi Shankar as ONGC Director

The Oil Ministry has reinstated Shashi Shankar as Director (Technology and Field Services) of ONGC pending an inquiry into alleged irregularities in an unawarded Rs 23 crore tender of 2011. Shankar, 54, is the youngest director on the board of the nation's most profitable oil company.

The Economic Times - 17.07.2015

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/oil-ministry-reinstates-shashi-shankar-as-ongc-director/articleshow/48097601.cms>

a relatively weaker cargo performance at the major ports which registered a modest growth of 4.7 percent in cargo volumes to 581 MT in fiscal year 2014-15," the rating agency said in a statement. It further said non-major ports have likely pushed up the overall growth rate by recording a 10 percent growth to 462 MT during 2014-15. The growth at major ports was pegged down due to continuing mining restrictions in major states like Karnataka, Goa and Odisha and other policy measures such as imposition of export duty.

The New Indian Express - 14.07.2015

<http://www.newindianexpress.com/business/news/Cargo-Handling-in-Indian-Ports-Rises-by-5.4-Percent-ICRA/2015/07/14/article2918445.ece>

B R REDDY Selected as CMD,SECL

B R Reddy has been selected as Chairman & Managing Director of South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL). 13 persons were interviewed by PESB.

PSU Khabar - 17.07.2015

<http://www.psukhabar.com/ReadArticle.php?id=1119&table=whispers>