

(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.)

BL in News

Boarding pass not needed to claim travelling allowance now

Government officials no longer need to submit boarding passes while claiming travelling allowance (TA). The department of personnel and training (DoPT), in view of difficulties expressed by various quarters in production of original boarding passes along with TA claims, has decided to do away with the stipulation and settle for a mere undertaking from the officer concerned that the journey was performed. "It has been decided with the approval of the competent authority that in order to simplify the procedure of settlement of TA claims, the condition of submission of boarding pass along with settlement of TA claim is dispensed with... however, the officer concerned, preferring travelling allowance, will have to attach an undertaking along with TA claims that the journey, as mentioned therein, has actually been performed by him/her," said a DoPT order issued on Tuesday.

The order further clarified that "notwithstanding the above, in case of extreme doubt, the controlling officer may be asked to verify the genuineness of the claim". The DoPT circular, issued by director (administration) Shri Prakash, reminded officers that air tickets against which the TA is to be claimed must be purchased only from the authorized travel agent, Balmer Lawrie & Co Ltd, and at the cheapest rate after comparing the available fare from the websites of reputed travel agents. However, in case Air India is offering cheaper rates, the air tickets may be bought directly from the national carrier.

The Times of India - 09.10.2014

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Boarding-pass-not-needed-to-claim-travelling-allowance-now/articleshow/44734047.cms>

Employees need not give boarding pass for TA claims: Govt

Business Standard - 08.10.2014

http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/employees-need-not-give-boarding-pass-for-ta-claims-govt-114100800564_1.html

Claim your travel allowance without showing boarding pass: DoPT

One India - 09.10.2014

<http://news.oneindia.in/india/claim-your-travel-allowance-without-showing-boarding-pass-dopt-1537308.html>

Central govt officers need not submit boarding pass to claim TA

The Hindu Business Line - 09.10.2014

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/policy/central-govt-officers-need-not-submit-boarding-pass-to-claim-ta/article6485668.ece>

Panel backs using cash-rich PSUs to revive sick units

A committee headed by NTPC Chairman Arup Roy Choudhury has endorsed the Government's view on revival of sick public sector undertakings with the help of cash-rich PSUs. The committee has submitted its report to the Ministry of Heavy industries and Public Enterprises. It had been asked to examine the feasibility of cash-rich Maharatnas, Navratnas and other Central public sector enterprises (CPSEs) seeding a joint venture (JV) company that would revive sick

Govt to ensure all PSUs procure 20 pc from MSMEs

The government would ensure that all the public sector units (PSUs) procure 20 percent of goods from Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), the Union Minister for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), Kalraj Mishra Thursday informed this at the 11th edition of Global SME Business Summit 2014 in New Delhi. "As far as procurement policy is concerned, only 32 PSUs have complied with the 20 percent mandatory

PSUs.

A senior Heavy Industries Ministry official said there would be consultations with cash-rich PSUs and accordingly, a detailed note would soon be put up before the Cabinet for a final decision. Profitable PSUs have over Rs 2 lakh crore of cash lying with them, mainly in banks. Heavy Industries Minister Anant Geete recently said there are 70 sick PSUs, of which 43 can be revived. However, according to an answer given by the Ministry in Parliament, there were 61 sick CPSEs as on March 31, 2013, with over 1.53 lakh employees. The official said the proposal drew inferences from various countries, including China.

The Hindu Business Line - 09.10.2014

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/panel-backs-using-cash-rich-psus-to-revive-sick-units/article6485804.ece>

Ministry seeks funds for Clean India Mission

The Swachh Bharat Abhiyan was first announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the Lok Sabha on June 11. He elaborated on it further in his Independence Day speech, explaining that it aims to create a 'mass movement' to realise Mahatma Gandhi's dream of a clean India by his 150th birth anniversary in 2019. The mission kicked off on September 25, with Ministers initiating cleanliness drives in their ministries and departments. On the birth anniversary of Gandhiji, Modi will launch the mission and administer the oath to gathering, followed by inaugurating toilets in Valmiki Colony in Central Delhi. Toilets and funds - Since the mission also involves setting up toilets, various Ministries are encouraging Central public sector enterprises (CPSEs) to take the initiative.

The Hindu Business Line - 10.10.2014

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/ministry-seeks-funds-for-clean-india-mission/article6466489.ece>

Oil PSUs set for structural change

Under-recoveries (losses incurred on selling regulated fuels like diesel, LPG and kerosene below their cost prices) on petroleum products are expected to decline by over 50 per cent over the next 2 years from 2013-14 levels due to decline in crude oil prices as well as ongoing efforts to move towards market-linked diesel prices. This will have a significant positive impact on the profitability of oil PSUs and the exchequer as well.

CRISIL Research believes that international crude oil prices and thereby petroleum product prices will slip by 8-10 per cent over the next two years to about \$100 per barrel in 2015 from an average of \$109 per barrel in 2013, barring any major geo-political events, fuelled by supply glut, waning demand growth and increased use of cleaner

procurement out of 277 PSUs," said Mishra.

The government is looking at amending public procurement policy to incorporate provisions against PSUs who fail to meet the mandatory at least 20 percent procurement by April 2015. The Minister also said the government will revise the definition of MSMEs to provide for a higher capital ceiling. "MSMEs should not face problem in getting bank loans. MSMEs will help in boosting the country's economy. The sector is the back bone of the country," he said. MSME sector contributes 8 percent of GDP and accounts for around 40 percent of the total exports and around 45 percent of the manufacturing output.

SME Times- 10.10.2014

<http://www.smetimes.in/smetimes/news/top-stories/2014/Oct/10/govt-to-ensure-all-psus-procure-20-pc-from-msmes631595.html>

'Govt. to use CSR initiatives to put up one crore dustbins'

One crore dustbins will be put up across the country under corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives as part of the Union Government's Swachh Bharat Mission, sources at the Centre and in the municipal corporations of Delhi said. A senior Central Government official said: "Corporate houses have been approached to ask about what they can contribute to the mission. Surely, donating dustbins could be one of the items on the agenda." According to sources in the civic bodies, the plan is under discussion in Delhi's political circles and Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to make an announcement about the same soon.

The Hindu - 09.10.2014

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Delhi/govt-to-use-csr-initiatives-to-put-up-one-crore-dustbins/article6484091.ece>

Clampdown on PSU fight

The government has barred ministries and state-run companies from filing legal cases against each other. Ministries and PSUs will have to go through a process of internal dispute settlement, which can go up to the Prime Minister's Office, instead of fighting legally against each other or the government. Sources said the orders came from the cabinet secretary, the top civil servant in the country. The move follows several acrimonious spats in courts between state-run firms and between PSUs and the government.

One of the latest and most controversial one was a government intervention in a case filed by ONGC against Reliance. The state-run oil explorer had claimed that the government and

fuels. While crude oil output from Iraq, Iran and North America will increase, global demand is expected to be impacted by weak consumption. The tepid consumption growth will be on account of better efficiencies and a shift towards natural gas in developed regions like North America and Europe, as well as relatively slower increase in demand from developing countries such as China and Indonesia because of reduction in subsidies and slower economic growth.

The Hindu - 04.10.2014

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/Industry/oil-psus-set-for-structural-change/article6471594.ece>

PSUs need to comply with 25% minimum public shareholding by August 2017

Listed public sector companies will have to comply with the norm of 25 per cent minimum public shareholding by August 21, 2017. This will help the Government's disinvestment programme as well as ensure more PSU shares for retail investors. At present, public sector companies are required to maintain 10 per cent minimum public shareholding, while listed private sector entities are required to have 25 per cent public shareholding.

However, On June 19, the SEBI board decided that there should be a uniform norm for all companies listed on stock exchanges. According to the website bsepsu.com, there are 25 Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs), nine public sector banks (PSBs) and one State-level public enterprise (SLPE) which are listed and have less than 25 per cent minimum public shareholding. The Finance Ministry has notified an amendment to the Securities Contracts (Regulation) Rules, 1957, according to which "every listed public sector company which has public shareholding below 25 per cent, on the date of commencement of the Securities Contracts (Regulation) (Second Amendment), Rules, 2014, shall increase its public shareholding to at least 25 per cent, within a period of three years, in the manner, as may be specified, by the Securities and Exchange Board of India." The date of effect is August 22, 2014.

The Hindu Business Line - 08.10.2014

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/companies/psus-need-to-comply-with-25-minimum-public-shareholdin/article6482173.ece>

Fuel companies absorbed Rs 26,600 crore losses on sales in 5 years: Oil Ministry

With CAG castigating state-owned fuel retailers for overcharging customers by Rs 26,626 crore over 5 years, Oil Ministry has defended the PSUs saying they had absorbed Rs 28,680 crore in losses on fuel sales during that period. The Comptroller and Auditor General of India in its latest report stated

its bureaucratic arm and regulator — the Director General of Hydrocarbons — had not done enough to protect its interests in its allegations that Reliance had drawn natural gas worth an estimated Rs 30,000 crore from its fields adjacent to RIL's KG D-6 block. The government had reacted furiously, stating that ONGC's charges were "frivolous" and that it "woke up from slumber" late in the day.

The Telegraph - 29.09.2014

http://www.telegraphindia.com/1140930/jsp/business/story_18887396.jsp#.VCqH6qQcTug

Independent directors: 'spring cleaning' of PSU boards puts Centre in a spot

Listed public sector companies may soon face regulatory squeeze. The easing out of "independent directors" from many boards by the Government is already beginning to haunt some PSUs, as their replacements are yet to be appointed. As many as 71 independent directors have reportedly stepped aside from various PSU boards after the new Government came to power on May 16 this year.

Chairmen and company secretaries of several listed public sector companies cannot quote compliance to Clause 49 of the listing agreement (board composition) for the upcoming December quarter if the Government does not move quickly and ensure that substitutes are appointed. The law requires that every listed company with an executive Chairman requires 50 per cent of the board as independent directors. For those with non-executive Chairmen, the number of independent directors should be one-third of the board strength. If the vacant slots for independent director are not filled up quickly, it will be difficult for market regulator SEBI and stock exchanges to demand compliance from the private sector as regards Clause 49, say experts.

The Hindu Business Line - 06.10.2014

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/companies/independent-directors-spring-cleaning-of-psu-boards-puts-centre-in-a-spot/article6475958.ece>

India plans committee to ease customs norms for boosting international trade

Two months after it blocked an international agreement on easing trade regulations, India has initiated measures to reform customs procedures and cut red tape to speed up international trade. The government has decided to set up a national committee on

that Indian Oil Corp, Hindustan Petroleum Corp and Bharat Petroleum Corp overcharged customers by Rs 26,626 crore from 2007-08 to 2011-12 by charging notional levies like customs duty on fuel they sold. In comments on CAG observation, the ministry defended the pricing methodology followed by the oil marketing companies (OMCs) of calculating the desired retail price in a manner as if the product was imported - adding customs duty, freight, insurance, ocean loss and wharfage charge to prevailing international price of petrol, diesel, LPG or kerosene.

Economic Times - 07.10.2014

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2014-10-02/news/54560472_1_customs-duty-cent-import-duty-omcs

Government Asks Employees to Register for Online Course on RTI

The Centre has asked employees responsible for disposing applications received under the Right to Information (RTI) Act to get themselves enrolled for its online certificate course. The Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) has been conducting an RTI online certificate course in English since 2009, and in Hindi and Telugu since 2012. The course is conducted through Centre for Good Governance (CGG), Hyderabad. "The RTI online certificate course not only offers the benefit of away-from-classroom-learning, but also provides a platform for reinforcing one's learning through interacting with experts and candidates. This course is open for all the citizens and is available free of cost," the DoPT said in an order.

Economic Times - 10.10.2014

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2014-10-10/news/54868256_1_certificate-course-rti-act-the-cgg

Contribution of travel, tourism to GDP to rise by 7.5% in 2014

The contribution of travel and tourism to the country's GDP is expected to rise by 7.5 per cent to Rs 2,34,145 crore this year. Travel and tourism had contributed Rs 2,17,810 crore to the GDP in 2013, showed a sectoral document for Tourism and Hospitality sector under the 'Make In India' campaign. "Tourism is a big employment generator. For every USD 1 million invested in tourism creates 78 jobs," it added. The document listed a series of factors as key drivers for tourism in the next decade. These include a growing recognition of tourism's contribution to employment and economic growth, availability of better infrastructure, focused marketing and promotion efforts and liberalisation of air transport.

trade facilitation, which will suggest and implement measures to ensure seamless movement of cargo by addressing constraints like high transaction costs and poor infrastructure. "The national committee on trade facilitation will be put in place soon, which will have representation from 7-8 departments. It will look after all aspects of trade facilitation," a senior commerce department official told ET on condition of anonymity.

The Economic Times - 10.10.2014

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/india-plans-committee-to-ease-customs-norms-for-boosting-international-trade/articleshow/44765924.cms>

Government puts regional air connectivity policy on hold

The civil aviation ministry has put on hold a plan requiring domestic airlines to operate more flights to small, remote cities, providing relief to both start-ups and existing carriers that had been worried about running up losses on such typically unprofitable routes. Civil aviation secretary V. Somasundaram has approved the deferment of the policy on "regional and remote area air connectivity" until further orders, a person with knowledge of the development said on condition of anonymity. The ministry communicated its decision to state-run Air India Ltd, Jet Airways (India) Ltd, InterGlobe Aviation Ltd's IndiGo, SpiceJet Ltd, AirAsia India Pvt. Ltd, Air Costa Aviation Pvt. Ltd and Go Airlines (India) Pvt. Ltd on 6 October, the person said.

Mint - 10.10.2014

<http://www.livemint.com/Politics/BVBBCI6COi2qTDFpkMsHJN/Government-puts-regional-air-connectivity-policy-on-hold.html>

Lifelong visa for PIOs to boost inbound tourism

Inbound tourism is likely to get a boost following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcement of lifelong visa for People of Indian Origin (PIO) in the United States. Modi had said on his recent visit to the US that PIO cardholders would be given lifelong visas while Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) schemes would be combined to simplify the process to come to India. "If the processes are simplified and huge bureaucratic delays are reduced, it could easily have a short- to medium-term impact on tourist inflows from the US," said Arjun Sharma, managing director of Le Passage to India, a bespoke travel agency that gets nearly 15% of its business from US-based clients.

Business Standard - 02.10.2014

http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/contribution-of-travel-tourism-to-gdp-to-rise-by-7-5-in-2014-114100200405_1.html

Railways doubles 'Tatkal' fares under 'dynamic pricing'

Indian Railways has entered the realm of private tour operators with a demand-based dynamic fare pricing system, under which premium 'Tatkal' tickets could cost passengers double the normal Tatkal fare. Under the scheme, introduced from 1 October, the Railways will sell half of the Tatkal quota tickets on select high-density routes through the 'Premium Tatkal Scheme'. More the demand, higher the price, that is the new rule for pricing such premium tickets. These premium tickets can be booked only online through the web site 'irctc.co.in' and the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC), the ticketing and catering window of Indian Railways, said the fare would vary according to slabs.

Domain-B - 04.10.2014

http://www.domain-b.com/companies/companies_I/Indian_Railways/20141004_ticketing.html

Logistics companies sailing high on e-commerce

The big potential of e-commerce success in the 1.25 billion strong nation has put life in the logistics firms during the last one year with e-commerce players largely depending on them for delivery of their orders. Share price of logistics companies are soaring high as Flipkart, Amazon, Ebay, Snapdeal and Myntra place their orders for shipment to multiple destinations. Share price of majority of the logistics companies like Blue Dart Express, Gati, Container Corporation of India, Patel Integrated Logistics, Allcargo, Corporate Courier and Cargo have doubled and some of them tripled their 52 week lows in the last one year as per BSE data.

Mydigitalfc - 07.10.2014

<http://www.mydigitalfc.com/news/logistics-companies-sailing-high-e-commerce-520>

Shri Atul Srivastava selected as Director (Pers), SAIL

PSEB has recommended the name Shri Atul Srivastava, ED, SAIL, for the post Director (Personnel), SAIL at a PESB meeting held on September 29, 2014. As many as 13 persons were interviewed for the same.

PSEB - 29.09.2014

<http://pesb.gov.in/recommendation/Recommendation-29092014.pdf>

The Economic Times - 03.10.2014

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2014-10-03/news/54599761_1_indian-origin-pios-tourism

Commercial vessels to get priority berthing

The Shipping Ministry has ordered all 12 major ports across the country to give priority berthing to commercial vessels as part of its target to increase cargo movement by at least four times to about 2500 million tonnes by 2020. "Major ports shall accord priority berthing, at least on one berth, to dry bulk/general cargo coastal vessels to enable shippers to transport goods from one port to another in India, irrespective of origin and final destination of the cargo," the order said. It said this was in addition to a dedicated berth for handling the coal that already exists in major ports. The port authorities are directed to accord priority berthing using "specific windows to coastal container vehicles.

The Free Press Journal - 02.10.2014

<http://freepressjournal.in/commercial-vessels-to-get-priority-berthing/>

PSUs told not to give Diwali gifts this year

With the finance ministry has asked state-owned banks and insurance companies to desist from doling out Diwali gifts this year. There is a general refrain among the other public sector undertakings (PSUs) from distributing such pleasantries this festival season. It is learnt that following an informal directive from the PMO to the ministries having PSUs under their administrative control to advise their commercial arms to desist from doling out gifts this Diwali, office of the coal, power and renewable energy minister, Piyush Goyal, has issued direction that they should "not publish diaries and calendars" and not to give "mementoes".

Asian Age - 13.10.2014

<http://www.asianage.com/india/psus-told-not-give-diwali-gifts-year-338>

Dr B P Sharma selected as CMD, Pawan Hans Ltd

PSEB has recommended the name of Shri Dr B P Sharma, ED, AAI, for the post of CMD, Pawan Hans Limited at a Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB) meeting held on September 30, 2014.

PSEB - 30.09.2014

<http://pesb.gov.in/recommendation/Recommendation-30092014.pdf>

Rajiv Sharma to act as CVC

The President of India has authorised Rajiv, Vigilance Commissioner, Central Vigilance Commission, to act as the Central Vigilance Commissioner, in the vacancy caused due to completion of the tenure of Shri Pradeep Kumar, Central Vigilance Commissioner. The authorisation is effective from the September 29, 2014, until the appointment of the Central Vigilance Commissioner.

Times of India - 01.10.2014

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Central-Vigilance-Commissioner>

Aruna Sundrarajan takes over as new BBNL CMD

Mrs. Aruna Sundrarajan, a 1982 batch IAS officer of Kerala cadre, has taken over as the CMD, Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL) — a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) of the Department of Telecommunications. The tenure of the new incumbent CMD is not going to be easy as broadband connectivity on Optical Fibre has not been provided even to a single Gram Panchayat against the target of 1,00,000 Gram Panchayats during the current year 2014-15.

egov - 10.10.2014

<http://egov.eletsonline.com/2014/10/aruna-sundrarajan-takes-over-as-new-bbnl-cmd/>

Cyclone Hudhud halts PSU operations

Crucial industrial establishments in the city such as Visakhapatnam Port Trust (VPT), Vizag airport, Hindustan Shipyard Limited and Gangavaram port were extensively damaged by Cyclone Hudhud, bringing them to a shuddering halt from Saturday evening. In fact, most of these entities were unable to assess the damage caused even by the end of the day as the city was on high alert and people were strongly advised by authorities not to step out of their homes. Most of them, however, seemed resigned to damages and said it would take at least a couple of days before some semblance of 'normalcy' could be restored.

Times of India - 13.10.2014

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/visakhapatnam/Cyclone-Hudhud-halts-PSU-operations/articleshow/44796538.cms>