

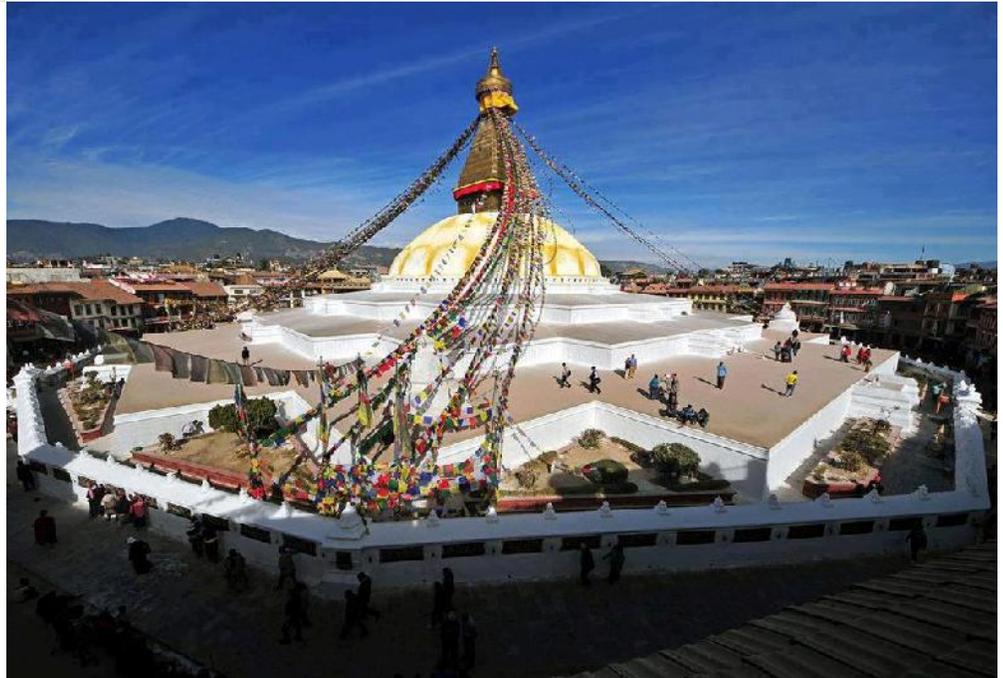


NICCI e-Newsflash

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Bouddha Stupa, the world heritage in Kathmandu.



India exempts Nepal-bound cargoes from detention charge

Local authorities in India have agreed to exempt Nepali exporters and importers from detention charges for Nepal-bound containers stranded by internal problems at Kolkata Port in West Bengal. The exemption follows continuous efforts by the Nepali Consulate General's Office in Kolkata at the request of Nepali traders to lobby for extending the 10-day deadline after which detention charges will be levied. "The recent problems at Kolkata Port slowed the clearance of Nepali containers which resulted in their piling up," said Consulate General Chandra Ghimire. "This could have led to detention charges but now they have been cancelled."

"However, the clearance process will now move faster as the local authorities have deputed additional staff at our request," Ghimire added.

Similarly, following complaints about different groups collecting taxes from Nepali trucks illegally while using the Kakarbhitta-Fulbari-Bangalbandh route for exports and imports to and from Bangladesh or third countries, the Consulate General's Office in Kolkata took up the issue with the Indian authorities recently.

"Now the problem of unauthorised taxes are no more as Indian authorities have assured us that they will stop them," said Ghimire who was in Jalpaiguri last week to take stock of the situation. "However, the problems created by the taxes collected by the Siliguri-Jalpaiguri Development Authority on Nepal-bound cargo have still not been sorted out. The bilateral treaty of transit has not envisioned such taxes being imposed on Nepal-bound cargo, and recent discussions with Indian officials in this regard are heading in a positive direction," he said.

E-registration of companies from Feb 7

In a bid to start the process of electronic registration of companies under the Company Act-2006, the Company Register's Office has asked all firms and companies to submit their online request to get username for respective companies.

According to a press release issued on Tuesday, the office has asked all the companies to send necessary details to the office

to get their usernames. "E-service manual outlines the information that is required to get user name," reads the release.

"On receipt of the online request, user name registration form will be sent to the email address of the concerned company." The release further states that the registration process will begin from February 7. ♦

Upgradation of customs to pick up

The Department of Customs (DoC) will be able to introduce inter agencies online connection by the end of April.

The inter-agency link will be possible after installation of web-based system in various customs offices, said director general at the department Mukti Narayan Paudel. "Major agencies like Inland Revenue Department, Department of Revenue Investigation and Department of Commerce and Supply Management will be connected after installation of IT system." Korea International Cooperation Agency (Koica) has been providing technical assistance to install IT system in the customs offices, he informed.

Department of Customs (DoC) will also modernise valuation and inspection system, apart from enhance risk-management in export-import of goods after the IT system installation at the customs points, he said, adding that the customs modernisation process will continue even after installation of IT system in the customs.

Asian Development Bank (ADB) has provided \$15 million to

prepare e-customs master plan, Paudel said. "ADB will also provide assistance to upgrade IT system in the customs to make real time inspection of activities of customs offices possible." Meanwhile, World Bank-funded project is going to reform customs sector.

World Bank has provided fund to construct six modern and integrated lab at main customs points, he said, informing that the department will also upgrade infrastructure at Birgunj Customs Office and study feasibility of constructing ICD at Dhodhara from assistance of World Bank.

The Department of Customs should also work to fulfill World Trade Organisation (WTO) compliances as it has pledged to follow WTO standards, he said, adding that the department should also revise its tariff structure according to World Trade Organisation standards and should adopt IT-based system to control customs fraud. IT-based clearance at customs point will be added advantage to control massive under-invoicing and smuggling due to lack of effective monitoring mechanism, he said. ♦

Indian market among the top five pharmaceutical emerging markets

The domestic pharmaceutical market of India is expected to clock a strong double-digit 13-14 % growth this year, buoyed by increasing sales of generic medicines, continued growth in chronic therapies and a greater penetration in rural markets.

The Indian market — projected to grow at a CAGR (compound annual growth rate) of 14-17 % over 2012-16 — is now among the top five pharmaceutical emerging, or 'pharmerging', markets. India is placed a tad lower in terms of growth rate to China, which is expected to register a 15-18 % growth. The pharmerging markets — including Brazil, Russia, Mexico, Turkey, India, China and others — are expected to register a CAGR of 12-15 % over 2012-16, slightly lower than that of the previous period (2008-12).

This year, the domestic market may be impacted marginally by around 0.5 to 2% by the government's pricing policy on essential medicines, which is yet to be implemented. The year 2012 closed with a growth of 12%, lower than the previous year's growth of 16%, according to data culled from research firm IMS Health.

Overall, IMS has forecast that the pharma market will grow at a CAGR of 13.7% between 2011 and 2016, with this year's

growth pegged between 11-15 %. Says Amit Backliwal, GM, India IMS Health: "Companies need to look at India from a state and regionalized view, more of a bottoms-up than top-down. They need to focus on access and penetration across disease and geography. A commercial model has to be evolved to address varying needs of stakeholders. Salesforce effectiveness and investments would be a big challenge and need to be actively tracked and managed."

The expansion of the urban middle class, coupled with improvements in health education and awareness, will drive demand for over-the-counter (OTC) and generic medicines.

Total spending on healthcare, which accounted for 4.1% of GDP in 2010, will continue to increase at double-digit rates, driven by a combination of rising incomes and a commitment to raise levels of public funding for the sector, IMS says.

The healthcare policy will be dominated by efforts to broaden access and improve the quality of care available in the public sector. Though universal health coverage is the ultimate goal, this will remain a distant prospect, with funding issues, chronic staff shortages and administrative shortcomings — all limiting progress. ♦ TNN - MUMBAI

Gujarat to produce 85 lakh bales of cotton in 2012-13: ICF

Gujarat is likely to see a production of 85 lakh bales of cotton in 2012-13 crop year despite the drought conditions. The state would lead the country in the cotton output, predicts the Indian Cotton Federation.

The data released by ICF predicts production of 325 lakh bales of cotton in the current crop year. Each bale is of 170

kilograms. Maharashtra is estimated to produce 80 lakh bales, followed by Andhra Pradesh with 68 lakh bales, and Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan that are likely to give 57 lakh bales of crop. Madhya Pradesh is likely to produce 16 lakh bales this crop year, while Tamilnadu would give 5 lakh bales and another 2 lakh bales would come from Orissa, ICF forecasts. ♦

ITC to invest Rs 1,000 cr in food, consumer goods sector

Cigarettes-to-hotels conglomerate ITC on 21st January said it will invest Rs 1,000 crore in food and consumer goods sector in the next two to three years.

The company got the possession of 39 acres last week at Panchla in Howrah district where it would build an integrated food and consumer goods facility, an ITC spokesperson said, adding that it will invest Rs 1,000 crore in the foods and consumer goods segment in the state over 2-3 years. The land

was given by the West Bengal Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation.

ITC had already got a parcel of 18 acres at Uluberia in Howrah district where a similar integrated facility would commence. The spokesperson said, adding that both the facilities would be carried out simultaneously and were likely to be operational in the next two years. ♦

PTI-KOLKATA

Apollo Hospitals lines up Rs 2,400 crore investments

Health-care major Apollo Hospitals has lined up investments of Rs 2,400 crore over next three years for expansion plans, which includes setting up 14 hospitals and a Proton Therapy centre for cancer treatment, a senior official said on 21st January at Chennai.

"As part of our overall expansion plans we have planned to open 14 hospitals in the next three years at an investment of Rs 2,000 crore," Apollo Hospitals Group Chief Financial Officer Krishnan Akhileshwaran told reporters here.

Stating that the company has been setting up two hospitals every three years, Apollo Hospitals Group Chairman Pratap C Reddy said they have expedited the process and are now establishing these 14 hospitals over the next 30 months.

"Some of them are in the final stage of completion." About signing of a contract worth Rs 400 crore with Ion Beam Applications SA for setting up the first Proton Therapy Centre,

Reddy said the cancer treatment costs would be from Rs 30 lakh which is 'one-fifth' of the cost offered in the US. Cost of the equipment would be Rs 300 crore, Akhileshwaran said.

The Proton Therapy Centre is expected to come on two acres of land at Old Mahabalipuram Road near Chennai, he said, adding 'clinical trials' and 'research activities' would be taken up at the Centre. The Centre is going to be the first of its kind to offer such services in South East Asia, Africa and Australian region, said Reddy, adding that the facility would have about 70 research scholars.

On the sale of its BPO division Healthstreet, Akhileshwaran said the deal was expected to be completed by next month. "As we hive-off Healthstreet, another Rs 200 crore would be available for us which we can use for our "overall expansion" plans, he said. Sutherland Global Services last year announced the acquisition of Apollo Healthstreet for a Rs 1,000 crore all cash-deal. ♦ PTI-CHENNAI

Welspun Energy commissions 15MW solar PV project in Rajasthan

Welspun Energy Limited (WEL), one of the India's leading power developer has commissioned a 15 mw solar photo voltaic (PV) Project in Rajasthan, the first of the 3 projects totalling 50 mw, that WEL's subsidiary had won under competitive bidding for batch-2, phase-1 of national solar mission.

WEL was the sole company to have been awarded a maximum capacity of 50 mw through three projects under batch-2 of Jawaharlal Nehru national solar mission (JNNSM). The projects are coming up in Phalodi Tehsil of Jodhpur District in Rajasthan. These three solar projects are expected to generate total electricity of 90 million kWh in a year.

"We are pleased to bring this 15 mw solar project online much ahead of its schedule. We are looking forward to becoming change agents for widespread green energy adoption and contributing to India's growth through clean energy," said Vineet Mittal co-founder & managing director, Welspun Energy Ltd.

Welspun has won these 3 projects through competitive bidding

conducted by NVVN (NTPC Vidyut vyapar nigam), the nodal agency for JNNSM phase-1. The first project of 15 mw, which was awarded at a tariff of Rs. 8.14 per kWh. The remaining two Projects of 15 mw and 20 mw are also close to completion and the entire 50 mw capacity will be commissioned in the coming weeks, much ahead of their contractual schedule of 26 February 2013.

These 50 mw Projects will produce enough energy to light up 2.5 Lac homes and also reduce carbon emissions to the extent of 78,000 Tons every year.

Apart from these 50 mw Projects, the company has also won a 130 mw solar PV Project in Madhya Pradesh, which will be the largest solar project to be developed by any Company in India. This 130 mw Project is also under construction and is slated for an early commissioning by end of 2013, making Welspun the largest clean energy IPP in the country with a portfolio of more than 300 mw of operational capacity and several hundreded mw under development. ♦ ET BUREAU NEW DELHI

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Luxury carmakers like BMW, Audi plan more 'Made in India' products in sub-Rs 25-lakh category

Luxury carmakers are planning more 'Made in India' products to increase the number of offerings in the sub-Rs25-lakh category to expand their presence in India - the Indian market has grown five fold in the past three years by selling several sub-Rs25-lakh models below Rs30 lakh, something they have been able to achieve on account of local production. They, along with new players, are now planning to bring down the threshold further, to below Rs25 lakh by assembling their smaller models in Indian factories.



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The plan to localise production by assembling in Indian plants, commonly known as completely knocked down (CKD) operations, helps carmakers offer lower prices as imported parts attract 10% import duty compared with the 75% charged on importing complete cars from overseas factories. Many automobile companies are increasingly preferring the local assembly route to bring down prices.

Industry officials say demand should rise to at least 50,000 luxury vehicles by 2015, from 25,000 units sold in 2012. EMW, the market leader in the Indian luxury space, is looking at retaining its number one slot by assembling the new BMW 1 Series later this year from its Chennai plant. ♦ ET BUREAU-NEW DELHI

Train fares to be costlier from January 22, 2013

Railway Minister Pawan Kumar Bansal announced about 21 per cent hike in passenger fares from 22nd January with an aim to mop up additional revenue of Rs 6600 crore in a year. According to him, the hike will rake in an additional Rs1200 crore between January 22 and March 31. He had also said that there will be no further hike in the Rail Budget 2013-14.

Fares of ordinary second class (suburban) trains went up by 2 paise per km while for non-suburban travel it will be 3 paise. Travel by second class mail and express trains became costlier by 4 paise per km, while it will be 6 paise more in sleeper class. Similarly, travellers by AC chair car and AC three tier have to shell out 10 paise more per km, first class by



3 paise, AC two tier by 6 paise and AC first class by 10 paise. The fares for first class, AC two tier and AC first/ executive class were already raised by 10 paise per km, 15 and 30 paise respectively in the fiscal's budget.

Bansal, who was made the Railway Minister last October, has said that the decision to hike the fares was "imperative" as lack of revision in the last 10 years has had a "telling effect" on the railway finances.

Dinesh Trivedi, who succeeded his party chief Banerjee, made a bold decision to hike fares in the Budget in February, 2012 to mop up an additional Rs 4000 crore but he was made to resign by his party Trinamool Congress which was opposed to it. ♦ PTI-NEW DELHI

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