

योजना आयोग भारत सरकार Planning Commission GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

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Communication, IT & Information Division
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"No matter how carefully you plan your goals, they will never be more than pipe dreams unless you pursue them with gusto"

W. Clement stone

Polity

- **Kejriwal issues ultimatum for Delhi polls:** Struggling to fight the negative perception after its drubbing in the Lok Sabha elections, Aam Aadmi Party's National Convenor Arvind Kejriwal tried to relaunch the organisation in New Delhi on Sunday. The party's attempt to bounce back was apparent in terms of its committed organisational efforts to mobilise nearly 9,000 supporters for the rally at Jantar Mantar. The party decided to come back to the venue, which was crucial to the origin of the Jan Lokpal movement. Addressing the rally, which was called to mount public pressure on the Bharatiya Janata party-led National Democratic Alliance government to hold elections to Delhi, Arvind Kejriwal gave a week's 'ultimatum' to Delhi Lieutenant Governor to dissolve the Assembly. "We are giving a week's time to the government. If they do not dissolve the Assembly, we will undertake door-to-door and signature campaign and demand dissolution of the Assembly so that fresh elections can be conducted". After the party's stunning performance in the Delhi Assembly polls, where it won 28 of the 70 Assembly seats, its failure to win even a single Lok Sabha seat was a shocker to the leadership. Last month, the party had decided to focus completely on its home turf and not to contest in the upcoming Assembly polls in Haryana and Maharashtra. (The Hindu).

Economy

- **India's Poor may shrink 75% by new World Bank formula:** The number of poor people in India, as counted by the world, will soon change dramatically. The World Bank has revised the Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) index and the global poverty line is being revised, too. Put together, the two measures will substantially alter the statistical calculation of poor people in the country. In all likelihood, it will be much lower than the existing calculations of the Indian government as well as the World Bank. The World Bank has set the global poverty line at \$1.25 a day at present. But, this was calculated on the basis of the 2005 PPP index. By that measure, India had about 400 million poor people in 2010. The revision of the PPP index suggests the Indian economy is much bigger and the purchasing power much higher than estimated earlier. It also means that the number of poor people is much lower than estimated earlier. The bank is revising the poverty line to adjust it to the changed index but early calculations by economists suggest the number of poor people in India is set to dwindle, statistically speaking. Once released, the new numbers, divorced from their mathematical caveats, will not only alter the perception of the Indian economy but also muddle the dynamics of resource sharing between developed and developing countries globally. While the global poverty figures are of little use functionally, they are the basis of discussing the global fight against poverty and in development debates they indicate where the developed world should provide funds to the 'poor countries'. (Business Standard).

Planning

- **Govt Plans Recast of Land-use Policy to Check Displacement:** The Narendra Modi government has set its eye on a recast of the country's land-use policy to make it more scientific and minimise displacement, much along the lines of the Gujarat model that enabled rapid industrialisation, by offering wasteland for development. There has been much criticism of the Land Acquisition Act of 2013, which the government and private players say will make land purchases almost impossible because it mandates high compensation and the resettlement and rehabilitation of affected families. The department of land resources, under the ministry of rural development, will revisit the land-use policy in the light of Gujarat's scientific model of land use rat's scientific model of land use for industrialisation to enforce it at the all-India level, a senior government official told ET. "Such a plan will help limit land acquisition and minimise displacement. It will help in creative integration of state plans on the one hand and the national perspective of development plan on the other," the official said, adding that officials will soon visit the western state to study its model. The move will help industrialists pick up plots within a short span of time at a relatively low cost with barely any obligation of rehabilitation because these would be tracts of wasteland. Besides, it will ensure that industries come up in such regions, which have been neglected, and boost their local economy. Today, most new factories are coming up in developed areas, where land acquisition is not only expensive but also leads to extensive delays and displaces a large number of families. (The Economic Times).

Editorial

- **Rape and reality:** The gulf between statistics and substance is not easily bridged. The number of rape cases registered in the country may conceal the reality in two significant ways. First, only a small proportion of the rapes are reported at all. Secondly, a significant number of rape cases relate to consensual sex but have been criminalised by circumstances. *The Hindu*'s six-month investigation into cases of sexual assault in Delhi has revealed that four of ten cases arose out of complaints by parents of girls who had eloped with boys. Another 25 per cent involved breaches of promise by men that they would marry their partners. And rape as it is conventionally understood, either by strangers or those known to victims in their family or neighbourhood, was seen only in 162 out of 583 cases registered in Delhi in 2013. Such cases resulted in a higher rate of conviction. The association of rape in the popular imagination with predators lurking in dark lanes to prey on vulnerable women has led to a general belief that better policing and more stringent laws will be the solution. While it is entirely appropriate that women's safety is given high priority, it is equally important to identify the strands of patriarchy discernible in the resort to complaints of rape at the instance of parents who disapprove of relationships, especially if these are inter-caste or inter-religious. If denial of freedom of choice to women in love and marriage is one issue, the disavowal of women's agency is another. (The Hindu)

BIHAR GOVT ORDERS FORCIBLE EVACUATION

VILLAGERS RELUCTANT TO LEAVE HOMES DESPITE GOVT WARNINGS

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
Patna/New Delhi, 3 August

The state administration in Bihar today began the forcible evacuation of villagers settled along the Kosi embankment as a flood threat loomed large over a large part of the northern part of the state in the wake of a disastrous landslide in northeast Nepal.

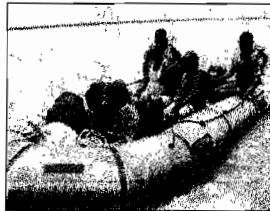
The measure is being taken as the Nepal government launches efforts to clear the landslide debris blocking the Kosi. The state authorities believe some 14 lakh to 25 lakh cusecs of water may come gushing down into the Bihar plains once the debris is cleared.

Fearing a possible repeat of the 2008 Kosi disaster or one of even bigger magnitude, the government today pressed into service 19 companies of NDRF and SDRF to evacuate the villagers to safer places. The government plans to lodge the villagers in 120 relief camps opened for them.

The forcible evacuation began after the villagers repeatedly ignored the gov-

NEPAL DISASTER

Nearly 200 people are missing after the massive landslide in northeast Nepal that blocked the Sunkoshi river



1 After the river was blocked, a huge lake ~ estimated to be 2.5 km long ~ was formed, putting dozens of villages in Nepal and India at risk of flash floods

2 The Nepalese Army carried out low-intensity blasts to remove the landslide debris and free the water accumulated in the newly formed lake, resulting in rise of water level of Kosi River in Bihar

ernment's warnings and refused to move out of their homes leaving behind property and cattle.

The government believes as many as five lakh people settled in nine districts of north Bihar ~ such as Supaul, Saharsa, Madhepura, Khagaria, Araria, Madhubani, Bhagalpur, Purnia and Darbhanga ~ would be in danger if the floods occur. So far, around 40,000 people have been evacuated, but

large numbers are still staying put. The major worry of the government is that the Kosi barrage at Birpur in Supaul district may not withstand the huge water pressure and burst.

"The barrage is capable enough to withstand a maximum of five lakh cusecs of water but we have been informed the water discharge in the river could be between 14 lakh cusecs to 25 lakh cusecs," Bihar disaster

management department's principal secretary Vyasji said. Keeping in view the looming danger, all the 56 gates of the barrage have been opened to discharge excess water.

Bihar chief minister Jitan Ram Manjhi conducted an aerial survey of the areas under threat and also held a meeting with senior officials. After undertaking the survey, Mr Manjhi said the government was ready for any situation.

The Centre, meanwhile, rushed essential supplies, relief teams and other assistance to Bihar to deal with the situation and put on standby several aircraft to handle any emergency.

Cabinet Secretary Ajit Seth chaired three emergency meetings of National Crisis Management Committee in this regard while an assessment team comprising experts from different fields is in Nepal to oversee the situation. Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said eight NDRF teams have already been deployed to Bihar and seven more will soon be sent.

Govt to review crude oil sourcing norms of PSUs

Every dollar saved per barrel will shave almost \$450 million from the import bill

RICHA MISHRA

New Delhi, August 3

India, with an annual oil import bill of nearly \$150 billion, would do anything to reduce this burden.

The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas is now taking a step in this direction. After a gap of almost 13 years it is reviewing the norms for crude oil sourcing by public sector oil refiners.

According to industry estimates, by just correcting the existing sourcing norms, every dollar saved by the PSUs would shave almost \$450 million from the import bill.

Constrained by Government norms, Indian Oil Corporation, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation and Bharat Petroleum Corporation end up buying crude oil at higher prices vis-à-vis their private sector counterparts.

PSU refiners are not allowed to negotiate with suppliers unlike their private sector counterparts. Neither can they procure crude oil only from those multinational companies identified in the guidelines.

"The Government is working on amending the norms ... even if a dollar is saved it makes a



Oil supplies

- The Govt is reviewing sourcing norms for PSUs after 13 years
- Almost 80% of imports are through term contracts
- Slow pace of oil discoveries is also adding to the high import bill

huge difference to the country's import bill," said a senior Ministry official.

The three refining companies are expected to make a presentation to Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan in the coming weeks.

Almost 80 per cent of crude oil is imported through term con-

tions between the buyer and seller. "Oil PSUs follow the tendering process which may not always get them the best deal," the official added.

The pricing of crude oil imported against term contracts is based on the seller's official selling price. This is applicable to all term customers.

It remains to be seen what will happen after the presentations are made to the Minister. "Let's face it, India is not China, where the Government ruthlessly pulls out all the stops to protect its companies and the world listens to these demands," said a PSU oil executive.

The slow pace of oil discoveries in India is also contributing to the high import bill. This is

where ONGC is expected to play a more aggressive role in future. It has been nearly four decades since a major find like Bombay High was made.

The Government is inclined to ask ONGC to focus on its core competence of exploration and give other plans (especially its downstream diversification) a break.

The import bill and subsequent subsidy support mechanism is causing havoc with refiners' balance sheets. Ironically, cash-rich ONGC has been hurt the most since it ends up throwing a lifeline of over ₹10,000 crore each quarter to the refining trio.

(With inputs from *Murali Gopalan*)

Centre to crack the whip on unscrupulous builders: Naidu

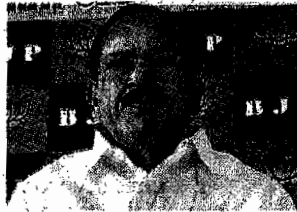
Govt keen to introduce Real Estate Development Regulatory Bill

OUR BUREAU

Hyderabad August 3

The Government is set to crack the whip on unscrupulous builders who diddled consumers by not delivering on their promises.

The Government is keen on introducing the Real Estate Development Regulatory Bill in the winter session of the Parliament, as part of its crackdown on such builders. The Union Minister for Urban



M Venkaiah Naidu, Union Minister for Urban Development in Hyderabad on Sunday.

PV SIVAKUMAR

Development and Parliamentary Affairs M Venkaiah Naidu said on Sunday the Bill was under active consideration of the Government and the Ministry is in consulta-

tion with all stakeholders including bodies such as the Confederation of Real Estate Developers' Associations of India.

He noted that some builders, engaged in developing private layouts and constructing townships, were escaping their responsibility of providing promised facilities such as sewage treatment plants.

"A proper law is needed to control such builders," the Minister told media persons here.

He also noted that builders were complaining about the delay in getting permissions — as many as 41 from different government departments — to develop housing projects.

"The Centre is thinking about simplifying the procedures including giving some clearance online and speeding up the entire process", Naidu stated.

Govt Plans Recast of Land-use Policy to Check Displacement

ON RIGHT TRACK Wasteland will be offered for development to deal with land acquisition woes.

New Model In the Offing

GOVT TO RELOOK AT land-use policy in the light of Gujarat's scientific model

GUJARAT MODEL will help industrialists pick up plots within short span of time at relatively low cost

WASTELAND WILL BE offered to facilitate industrialisation and development

WASTELAND ATLAS will be updated with detailed info about such lands

MOVE WILL boost local economy of neglected regions

YOGIMA SETH SHARMA
NEW DELHI

The Narendra Modi government has set its eye on a recast of the country's land-use policy to make it more scientific and minimise displacement, much along the lines of the Gujarat model that enabled rapid industrialisation, by offering wasteland for development.

There has been much criticism of the Land Acquisition Act of 2013, which the government and private players say will make land purchases almost impossible because it mandates high compensation and the resettlement and rehabilitation of affected families.

The department of land resources, under the ministry of rural development, will revisit the land-use policy in the light of Gujarat's scientific model of land use for industrialisation to enforce it at the all-India level, a senior government official told ET.

"Such a plan will help limit land acquisition and minimise displacement. It will help in creative integration of state plans on the one hand and the national perspective of development plan on the other," the official said, adding that officials will soon visit the western state to study its model.

Information about the wasteland areas in each state will be made available to investors looking for greenfield expansion

Besides, it will ensure that industries come up in such regions, which have been neglected, and boost their local economy.

Today, most new factories are

coming up in developed areas, where land acquisition is not only expensive but also leads to extensive delays and displaces a large number of families. The changeover would require the government to update the wasteland atlas of the country with detailed descriptions so that it can be used by public and private players scouting for hassle-free land. The wasteland data of India was last updated in 2011.

The idea is to verify the updated wasteland atlas with states, which will prepare a comprehensive survey and documentation of the area, its use, titles and all related information to determine its potential.

This information about the wasteland areas in each state will be made available to investors looking for greenfield expansion. Of the national land area of about 3,166 lakh hectares, 467 lakh hectares, or 15%, is wasteland, including uncultivable land.

Centre plans changes in atomic energy law for NPCIL ventures to take off

ANIL SASI

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 3

THE Centre is looking to move amendments to the Atomic Energy Act, 1962 to enable the licensing of three joint ventures proposed by state-owned Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd — with NTPC Ltd, Indian Oil Corporation and National Aluminium Company Ltd (Nalco) — to set up new atomic power projects in the country.

Amid concerns over India's nuclear liability provisions holding up the deployment of imported Light Water Reactor-based projects in collaboration with global vendors, the proposal by NPCIL to strike joint ventures with cash-rich PSUs is being seen as an alternative strategy to tide over the paucity of funds and ramp up execution capability for new projects using the indigenous pressurised heavy water reactor technology.

"Amendments to the Atomic Energy Act, 1962 to enable the licensing of NPCIL's three joint ventures — with NTPC, Indian Oil Corporation and Nalco — to set up nuclear power projects is under active consideration," a Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) official said.

The leveraging of NTPC, IOC and Nalco's project exe-



cution capabilities is part of the DAE's medium-term plan. Under the short-term capacity expansion programme, the NPCIL is already working on ramping up the existing capacity of 5,780 MWe by three folds by the year 2023-24.

Currently, nuclear power reactors set up in the country are being funded by a mix of debt and equity and are executed by NPCIL.

The equity requirements are met from internal resources of the NPCIL, a PSU under the DAE, and domestic budgetary support.

While NPCIL itself has Rs 12,000 crore of investible surplus, the three other PSUs, including NTPC, Nalco and IOC, have broadly agreed to bring in Rs 10,000 crore each.

NPCIL has entered into

three separate joint ventures with the three companies. However, these companies require an amendment to the Atomic Energy Act to start functioning and the joint ventures are waiting for the amendment.

The plan entail IOC, NTPC and Nalco each picking up 49 per cent equity in atomic projects proposed to be set up in partnership with NPCIL, which will hold majority equity in the three proposed ventures.

NPCIL now operates 21 reactors with a generation capacity of 5,780 MWe. "Of the 20,000 MWe target for 2020, NPCIL — which has a surplus of Rs 12,000 crore, including cash reserves — can manage only about 10,000 MWe of new capacity through its own financial resources. Hence, funding from other sources is needed to supplement NPCIL's efforts and the best candidates are PSUs, especially those in the core sector with strong financials and cash flows, an official said.

The Atomic Energy Act, 1962 prescribes that a company in which not less than 51 per cent of the paid-up share capital is held by the Central government can operate nuclear stations. However, the licensing of joint ventures is a grey area.

PRIME MINISTER'S NEPAL VISIT

Modi meets Koirala;
3 agreements signed

PRESSTRUST OF INDIA
Kathmandu, 3 August

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday met his Nepalese counterpart Sushil Koirala and the two sides signed three agreements, including a Nepalese rupee (NR) 69 million grant to Nepal to supply iodated salt to curb iodine deficiency diseases.

Modi, who arrived here this morning on his maiden official visit to Nepal, met Koirala at Singha Durbar Secretariat.

The two leaders discussed various issues, including Nepal's peace process and constitution-drafting process as well as economic issues.

They also discussed various facets of mutual relations and issues of common interest.

After the talks, Modi and Koirala witnessed the signing of three agreements.

Under the first agreement, India will provide a grant assistance worth NR 69 million to supply iodated salt to curb goitre and other diseases related with iodine deficiency.

The second agreement was regarding the amendment of Articles 17 and 18 of the Pancheswor Multiple Project, the *Himalayan Times* reported.

The third agreement is about cooperation between Nepal Television and Doordarshan, the state-owned television stations of both the countries, it said.

From Singhadurbar, Modi went to the Constituent



PM Narendra Modi waves to people on the streets in Kathmandu, on Sunday.

PHOTO: PTI

Assembly building in New Baneshwar to meet Speaker Subas Chandra Nembang.

On his way to the Constituent Assembly, Modi stopped his convoy to meet common people.

Earlier, Modi, the first Indian Prime Minister to pay a bilateral visit to Nepal in 17 years, was given a rousing welcome with his counterpart receiving him at the Tribhuvan International Airport, deviating from protocol for the purpose.

Deputy Prime Ministers Bam Dev Gautam and Prakash Man Singh were also present at the airport.

Nepalese Foreign Minister Mahendra Pandey paid a courtesy call on Modi and briefly discussed some bilateral issues,

including hydro-power, trade, energy and security.

"The talks were held in a very cordial and friendly atmosphere," Pandey said.

Modi, in his pre-departure statement summing up the sentiment attached to the two-day trip, had said, "I am excited about my visit and pleased that I am able to go there within weeks of assuming office as prime minister." Modi had said he looks forward to working with the Nepalese leadership to forge a "new relationship" by identifying steps to strengthen bilateral cooperation in key sectors, including trade and investment, hydropower, agriculture and agro-processing, environment, tourism, education, culture and sports.