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NEWS AND VIEWS

Polity	❖ Katju raises storm in House...
Economy	❖ States Finances on Mend, But Contingent Liability Weighs...
Planning	❖ Ministries to share five-year 'deliverable' plans with PMO...
Editorial	❖ Pseudo-swadeshi defence...

"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

- **Katju raises storm in House:** The stunning disclosure by former Supreme Court judge Markandeya Katju that three former Chief Justices of India succumbed to political pressure during the UPA-I Government to grant extensions to a "corrupt" Additional Judge of the Madras High Court has snowballed into a major controversy. Katju also alleged that the Manmohan Singh Government was blackmailed by one of its allies in this case. While former Chief Justice of India KG Balakrishnan rejected Justice Katju's claim, political parties came out with mixed reactions. The AIADMK and the BSP demanded a probe into the allegation, the Congress rubbished it, and the Shiv Sena and the CPI questioned the timing of Justice Katju's revelation. In both Houses of Parliament, members of AIADMK demanded immediate probe into Katju's charge. Waiving copies of the newspaper that published Katju's article, AIADMK MPs led by V Maitreyan stalled the proceedings in the Rajya Sabha. They sought a probe into the role played by its arch rival DMK in influencing the UPA Government to seek favour for the judge, who is reliably learnt to be Justice Ashok Kumar. He retired as judge of Andhra Pradesh High Court and is no more. Maitreyan wanted to know if former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who was seated in the House, was aware of the allegation against the judge and if his ally DMK had put pressure on his Government. In the Lok Sabha, M Thambidurai (AIADMK) led the protest seeking a probe into this issue. (The Pioneer).

Economy

- **States Finances on Mend, But Contingent Liability Weighs:** Growing contingent liabilities pose a risk to state government fiancés even though their overall debt position has improved, a Reserve Bank of India staff study has said. It has also raised concerns over the current economic slowdown likely hampering states' revenue-raising capacity and hence, adding to their debt burden. Findings of the study - Debt Sustainability at the State Level in India - posted on the RBI website showed that though state governments' debt position is sustainable in the long run, contingent liabilities, primarily in the form of guarantees issued by them, remain an area of concern. "The strong presence of contingent liabilities calls for a holistic assessment of debt position of states by reckoning their off-budget fiscal position, including the impact of operations of state public sector enterprises," it said. The study involved a debt sustainability analysis covering 20 states for the period 1980-81 to 2012-13. The debt position, after deteriorating between 1997-98 and 2003-04, has witnessed a significant improvement since 2004-05, largely due to favourable macroeconomic conditions as well as policy efforts by the central and state governments. (The Economic Times).

Planning

- **Ministries to share five-year 'deliverable' plans with PMO:** The government has decided to ask secretaries of all ministries to share their five-year plans with the Prime Minister's Office instead of letting it be decided by the Planning Commission. From next week, all Union ministries would make presentations on select targets to Prime Minister Narendra Modi suggesting "realistic ways" to achieve them in the five-year span of the current government and within the available resources. The exercise will steer clear of figures and graphics and is expected to focus on policy and regulatory hurdles that block each sector and bereft of jargons, an official connected with the exercise said. It is also an indication that there would be no large scale changes at the secretary level in the government, post Budget. "The ministries will be expected to steer clear from extending sweeping suggestions to difficult issues and would also refrain from giving one-size-fits-all solutions to vexed matters," the official said. The presentations this time will build on the one organised earlier by the Cabinet secretariat for the Prime Minister. Planning Commission member secretary, Sindhushree Khullar, would vet the presentations first and would also intersperse them with the Plan panel's inputs on the key infrastructure sectors including roads, ports and energy sectors like coal and power. At least two secretaries told The Indian Express that during the earlier round of presentations, the Prime Minister and his team had asked them for feedback, which would now be built into the fresh set. (The Indian Express).

Editorial

- **Pseudo-swadeshi defence:** The Budget proposal hiking foreign direct investment limit in defence manufacturing from 26 to 49 per cent seems pragmatic at first glance. On the one hand, it recognises the need for FDI in a sector that is both capital- and technology-intensive. On the other, the 49 per cent foreign ownership cap ensures Indian management and control, regarded as necessary in addressing national security concerns. The reality, however, is that the 26 per cent cap permitted since 2001 has helped attract neither capital (cumulative FDI flows amount to less than $5 million) nor technology. Increasing this to 49 per cent makes no material difference from a control and management standpoint. It is doubtful whether any global original equipment manufacturer would want to license proprietary technology to a company where it has no powers to even block ordinary resolutions — which is possible only with a minimum 50 per cent holding. More specious is the 'national security' argument against higher FDI limits in defence. Currently, India meets an estimated 70 per cent of its defence hardware requirements through imports. There is no reason to believe that a company producing from a facility within India and governed by Indian law should pose an inherent threat to national security merely because it is foreign-owned. This threat, if at all, should be more from imported equipment. Moreover, FDI in defence is subject to industrial licensing. The Government can insist on background checks and impose additional security measures, both at the time of investment approval and also via regular inspections of the manufacturing site. (Business Line)

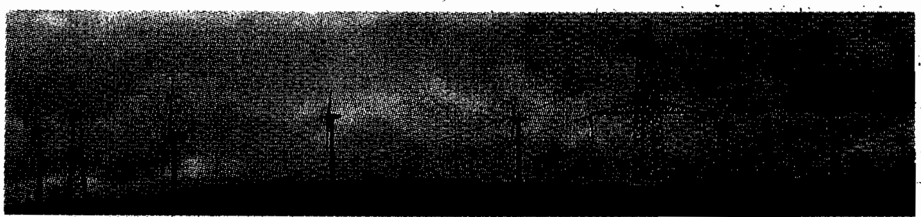
The Financial Express

Date: 22/07/2014

Page No. 02

Govt to give nod to delayed NTPC N-venture

Subhash Narayan



Installed power capacity (as on May 31, 2014; in MW)

Sector	Coal	Gas	Diesel	Nuclear	Hydro	Renewable	Total
Central	45925.01	7065.53	0.00	4780.00 *	10485.41	0.00	68255.95
State	54428.00	6974.42	602.61	0.00	27482.00	3803.66	93290.70
Private	47215.38	8568.00	597.14	0.00	2694.00	27888.47	86962.99
All India	147568.39	22607.95	1199.75	4780.00	40661.41	31692.14	248509.64

* The capacity has gone up to 5,780 MW in June with the first unit of Kudankulam plant attaining full capacity of 1,000 MW

New Delhi, July 21: The Modi government is set to nurture the nuclear ambitions of the country's largest power producer NTPC by facilitating amendments to the Atomic Energy Act (AEA), allowing a joint venture between two government entities or public sector undertakings to put up projects in the nuclear field.

Although NTPC, India's largest power generator, had entered into an MoU with state-run Nuclear Power Corporation of India (NPCIL) way back in 2009 for setting up nuclear power ventures, the project did not take off because AEA doesn't recognise the JV (special purpose vehicle) automatically to be a PSU. The proposed amendment, as per favourable advice from the law ministry, sources said, would solve this problem.

Currently, activities in the nuclear field, including setting up of nuclear power plants, are exclusively limited to the government and PSUs owned by it. Private entities, including those in joint ventures with government entities and special purpose vehicles (SPV), are not allowed to enter the nuclear field even if it means operations for civilian purposes.

Sources said the power ministry has asked the Prime Minister's Office to resolve the issue by taking the proposed amendments in the AEA for Cabinet approval before it can be introduced in Parliament. The department of atomic energy has also moved for amendments after getting approval from the law ministry. "NTPC has also pushed for clarity over the issue that has prevented Anushakti Vidhyut Nigam, a 51:49 joint venture between NPCIL and itself, to start operations," said an NTPC official asking not to be named.

The two signed an MoU for setting up the JV in 2009 but failed to make any headway due to legal issues coming in way of the JV company.

NTPC proposed to enter nuclear power generation with NPCIL with an initial capacity of 2000 MW. This would have entailed a total investment of close to ₹20,000 crore. Nuclear power, being a highly capital intensive sector, requires about ₹10 crore per MW and projects are generally financed in 70:30 debt-equity ratio.

The clarity coming by way of amendments to the AEA is expected to help other such SPV being considered by NPCIL. State-owned upstream oil major ONGC had also indicated its interest in forging an alliance with NPCIL for setting a power project with 2,000 MW capacity.

With the first unit of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power plant attaining its maximum capacity of 1,000 MW in June, India's current nuclear power generation capacity stands at 5,780 MW out of total installed capacity of close to 2,50,000 MW. This is considered very small and therefore the government has set up an ambitious target of taking nuclear power capacity to 20,000 MW by 2020 and 63,000 MW by 2032.

However, after the 2011 Fukushima disaster in Japan, people around proposed Indian nuclear plant sites have intensified protests and environmentalists have raised questions about atomic energy as a clean and safe alternative to fossil fuels. This has created hurdles in faster development of such plants. The Modi government intends to change this and amendments in the Act is the first such step.

Govt may ask SEZs to export 51% of output

Arun S
New Delhi, July 21

THE government is considering a proposal to make it mandatory for special economic zones (SEZs) to export at least 51% of goods and services they produce. Currently, these zones, hit by the imposition of minimum alternate tax (MAT) and dividend distribution tax (DDT) in 2012 Budget, need only to be postitive net foreign exchange (NFE) earners over a period of five years from the start of operations.

The commerce ministry has begun consultations with stakeholders on the new proposal, said sources. The proposal, in fact, was first put up in August 2012 by Public Accounts Committee (PAC) headed by BJP leader Murli Manohar Joshi.

The finance ministry had objected to the 'positive NFE norm', saying it would not result in more exports from SEZs as units that were not importing any inputs would not be obliged to export in this case

The panel had said since SEZ units enjoy considerable tax benefits and are expected to fuel economic growth, the misuse of the SEZ scheme must be prevented by revisiting the policy and plugging the loopholes in implementation.

It said in the SEZ Act, which came into force on February 2006, there was no requirement of undertaking exports and it whittled down the primary objective of the Act which was to promote exports and thereby boosting forex earnings.

The finance ministry had objected to the "positive NFE norm", saying it will not result in more exports from SEZs as units that are not importing any inputs will not be obliged to export in this case.

Explaining the 51% norm, officials said: "If an SEZ unit imports inputs worth $100 and sources another $900 worth goods from India, then by taking into account a 10% value addition over the total input cost of $1,000, the production would be worth $1,100. As per the positive NFE norm, the SEZ unit would need to export only $101. But with the 51% norm, this would mean a much higher export obligation of $561 (or 51% of $1,100). However, if a unit chooses to import inputs worth $1,000 and does a value addition of just $1, the export obligation would be slightly lesser at $510.5.

"Such a move would only result in lesser value addition and sourcing from within the country. With SEZs reeling under taxes such as MAT and DDT, a move like this could be the final nail in the coffin," an official said.

Lokpal: Babus to declare assets under new rules

Employees need to give details of their immovable properties and statement of debts and other liabilities on first appointment or as on March 31 of every financial year

New Delhi, July 21: The central government has notified rules under the Lokpal Act making it mandatory for all its employees to file declarations of their assets and liabilities and those of their spouses and dependent children.

It has issued new forms for filing these returns which have fields to give details on cash in hand, bank deposits, investment in bonds, debentures, shares and units in companies or mutual funds, insurance policies, provident fund, personal loans and advance given to a person or any entity, among others.

The employees need to declare motor vehicles, aircraft, yachts or ships, gold and silver jewellery and bullion possessed by them, their spouses and dependent children, according to the form.

They need to give detail of their immovable properties and statement of debts and other liabilities on first appointment or as on March 31 of every financial year.

There are about 50 lakh central government employees, including IAS, IFS and IPS, among others.

The rules, Public Servants (Furnishing of Information and Annual Return of Assets and Liabilities and the Limits for Exemption of Assets in Filing Returns) Rules, 2014-- were notified by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) last week. *PTI*

Business Line

Date 22/07/2014
Page No. 17

'Modern retail may hold the key to controlling food inflation'

Retailer is working with Maharashtra Government to rein in veggie prices

PURVITA CHATTERJEE

Mumbai, July 21

Modern trade retailers are set to come to the rescue of spiralling food inflation. The Consumer Affairs Ministry recently called for suggestions from top retailers to contain the surge in retail prices. Given their advantageous sourcing capabilities, fruit and vegetable retailers are expected to help provide customers with more competitive prices.

Newly formed Freshkins, a vegetable retailer promoted by former employees of the Future Group and Reliance Retail, expects to rein in prices at its stores by directly sourcing from farmers. When vegetable prices surged in Mumbai, Freshkins was formed with the support of the Maharashtra State Agriculture Marketing Board.

K Radhakrishnan, Chief Mentor, Freshkins, said, "We did meet the Consumer Affairs Secretary recently to discuss ways to contain spiralling prices. With Freshkins, we will offer fruits and vegetables that will definitely be cheaper than the (rest of the) market as we are removing the middleman and sourcing directly from farmers."

Set up with an investment of ₹15 crore, Freshkins will run on a franchise model with five stores initially in Mumbai, each measuring 250 sq ft.

Tight rein Large format retailers can cut prices by bypassing the middlemen. REUTERS

Food inflation a concern

"We expect to be a category killer with our prices. Modern trade can help in insulating prices to a certain extent and reduce wastage. After Mumbai, we are looking at Delhi," added Radhakrishnan.

The rising cost of vegetables and fruits has been a growing concern for the newly appointed Modi Government. With potatoes and onions getting more expensive, it had recently brought the items under the Essential Commodities Act to discourage hoarding.

Though big retailers like Reliance Retail and the Future Group have been sourcing part of their supplies directly from farmers, organised fruit and vegetable retailing comprises a mere three per cent of the market. Most retailers have distribution centres and have adopted a hub-and-spoke model with cold chain facilities to service their stores.

Sumit Saran, Head of International Foods, Future Consumer Enterprises, said, "The future (in controlling prices) lies with modern retail, as it has the bandwidth and financial means to address issues related to structural sourcing, which is impossible for unorganised players."

Market sources observed that reducing the control of the middleman with the proposed abolition of the APMC (Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee) or mandis, where farmers sell their produce directly, would also help in improving margins for big retailers in the fresh fruits and vegetables segment.

"The removal of the APMC Act is expected to benefit modern trade retailers with better margins as most of them are not profitable in the food and grocery formats," confirmed Keith Sunderlal, CEO, SCS Group, an agri-business consulting company.

Business Standard

Date 22|07|2014

Page No. 04

Spectrum can be shared by two: Trai

Move could help companies significantly reduce the cost of mobile services

BS REPORTER
New Delhi, 21 July

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) on Monday released much-awaited guidelines on sharing of radio frequencies in all bands among debt-laden cellphone service providers, to optimally use limited air waves.

Mobile operators are allowed to share network infrastructure like cellphone towers, which has helped them reduce costs, but not air waves.

Two companies could share spectrum if they held it in a common band in a service area and if the radio frequencies were bought in auction or at market price, Trai said in its recommendations to the department of telecommunications (DoT), which can accept them or seek clarifications.

"Spectrum in the bands of 800/900/1,800/2,100/2,300/2,500 MHz will be sharable provided both the licensees are having spectrum in the same band," Trai said. In an earlier recommendation, the telecom regulator had recommended frequencies in use for third generation (3G) cellular services not be shared.

Earlier this month, the Economic Survey had suggested better spectrum management through trading and sharing to bring down the cost of this limited resource.

Bharti Airtel, Vodafone and Idea Cellular can unclog their networks in Delhi and Mumbai by borrowing air waves. Other operators like Tata Teleservices and Aircel can make money by lending unused radio frequencies. Subscribers stand to gain as fewer calls drop and surfing speeds rise. Rates could fall, too, as spectrum auctions turn less fierce.

"Spectrum sharing will be restricted to only two licensees subject to the condition that there will be at least two independent networks provided in the same band," the regulator said and added the DoT should charge a ₹50,000 fee from a cellphone service company for each area it intends to share air waves in.

Trai also suggested the spectrum use charge for those sharing be increased by 0.50 per cent for both operators. It added that if Company X got into a sharing agreement with Company Y, half the spectrum held by Company Y should be considered as additional spectrum held by Company X in a specific band, and vice-versa. Regulations permit cellphone service providers a maximum of 50 per cent of the radio frequencies assigned in a circle and 25 per cent in a frequency band.

If either or both of operators sharing air waves were allocated spectrum without auction, Trai recommended they be permitted to offer only services that can be provided through administratively held spectrum.

The government must consider companies sharing air waves in an entire service area and not in parts, the regulator said. This will help it calculate the adjusted gross revenue, which is linked to the government's income from telecom services.

"The regulator could have made it much simpler. It could have opted for a simpler spectrum use charge, and could have looked into permitting spectrum sharing among more than two operators. Also, keeping it band specific limits growth," said Rajan Mathews, director-general of the Cellular Operators Association of India. As these were not final guidelines, there would be some tweaks to support the industry, he added.

Jaideep Ghosh, Partner, KPMG in India, said: "Trai has taken cognizance of the practical challenges which may arise when operators try to share the spectrum, e.g., need for coordinated network planning, actual realised capacity in a sharing scenario to be lower compared to a scenario where operator acquires the spectrum on its own. This is reflected in the reasonable increase in spectrum charge as well as nominal charges to be paid to the government."

Hemant Joshi, partner in consultancy firm Deloitte Haskins & Sells, said, "The government's purpose of optimally utilising spectrum through sharing will be achieved if it decides not to levy the additional user charges and not to restrict sharing to bands."

CALL FOR CHANGE

- Two companies can share spectrum between themselves only if both hold spectrum in a particular band, in a particular service area
- Spectrum should either be acquired through auction or the companies have to pay the market determined rate for the airwave
- All can access spectrum, that is, spectrum in the bands of 800/900/1,800/2,100/2,300/2,500 MHz will be shareable, provided both the licensees have spectrum in the same band
- A company with 3G spectrum can only share its airwaves with a company that has 3G spectrum in a common circle
- Spectrum usage charge after sharing will be increased 0.50 per cent for both the operators
- Incumbent operators such as Bharti Airtel, Vodafone India and Idea Cellular, which have been considering increasing their spectrum holding in high-density circles such as Delhi and Mumbai, will get a new avenue
- Operators such as Tata Teleservices and Aircel will get a chance to monetise their unused spectrum holding
- Mobile users are likely to get better service, especially less call drops and better data speed
- Tariffs may actually fall as operating expenses of operators will come down

For full reports, visit www.business-standard.com

The Economic Times

Date: 22/07/2014
Page No. 10

State Finances on Mend, But Contingent Liability Weighs

Economic slowdown means states' revenue-raising capacity may be limited, finds an RBI study

OUR BUREAU
MUMBAI

Growing contingent liabilities pose a risk to state government finances even though their overall debt position has improved, a Reserve Bank of India staff study has said. It has also raised concerns over the current economic slowdown likely hampering states' revenue-raising capacity and hence, adding to their debt burden.

Findings of the study – Debt Sustainability at the State Level in India – posted on the RBI website showed that though state governments' debt position is sustainable in the long run, contingent liabilities, primarily in the form of guarantees issued by them, remain an area of concern.

"The strong presence of contingent liabilities calls for a holistic assessment of debt position of states by reckoning their off-budget fiscal position, including the impact of operations of state public sector enterprises," it said.

The study involved a debt sustainability analysis covering 20 states for the period 1980-81 to 2012-13.

The debt position, after deteriorating between 1997-98 and 2003-04, has witnessed a significant improvement since 2004-05, largely due to favourable macroeconomic conditions as well as policy efforts by the central and state governments.

But despite this improvement in the last decade, the recent growth slowdown and volatility in the financial markets have raised fresh concerns about the financial health of states, the study said. The slowdown in growth momentum has implications for the revenue-raising capacity of state governments, which may constrain their debt-servicing capacity while also increasing the borrowing requirements.

An analysis of the vulnerability of state government debt based on indicators such as spread, average maturity and ownership pattern indicated that investment interest is very high for state government papers. This is because the yields on these papers are higher than those on central government bonds. It appears that investors perceive their investment in state government securities to be credit-risk free, as they possibly don't factor in state-specific risk factors, it said.

Disaggregated-level analysis reveals that despite an overall improvement in debt position of the states, some of them continue to show signs of fiscal stress and increasing debt burden. The economic slowdown may lead to further deterioration of the debt position of these states, the study stated.

The Pioneer

Date: 22/07/2014
Page No. 10

FM asks I-T Dept to unearth black money at home too

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley on Monday asked the I-T Department to focus its effort on unearthing 'quite large' black money within the country as well.

"The Government is making full efforts to bring back the black money stashed abroad, but the officers of the (Income Tax) Department have to make equally serious efforts to unearth black money within the country," he said in a statement.

He asked "all senior officers to focus their efforts to unearth black money within the country which is also quite large".

The Government has set up a special investigation team (SIT) to unearth black money stashed abroad.

The SIT, headed by former Supreme Court Judge M B Shah and Vice Chairman Arijit Pasayat, has 11 members in the panel who are heads of many investigative and enforcement agencies of the country.

The Finance Minister also hoped that revenue targets fixed for direct taxes in the current fiscal would not only be achieved but would be surpassed as well.

The direct tax collections for the current fiscal has been pegged at ₹7,36,221 crore.

"In order to achieve this target, the officers of Income Tax Department will have to work with the highest standard of ethics... Credibility of the department is its biggest asset," he said.

He emphasised that officers are duty-bound to work in a non-adversarial, non-intrusive, transparent and fair manner, yet they have to deal firmly with those trying to evade taxes.

"The job of the officers of the I-T department is very difficult in the sense that on the one hand they have to achieve the tax collection targets and on the other hand to play the role of tax facilitator for the assesse," he said, while addressing the 30th annual conference of Principal Chief Commissioners, Principal Directors General (DGs), Chief Commissioners & DGs of I-T Department here.Asking officials to find innovative means to achieve revenue targets, Revenue Secretary Shaktikanta Das said they should work as a facilitator and achieve targets by using fair and transparent means.

The focus and efforts of the officers of the department should be to reduce tax arrears which are to the tune of Rs 4 lakh crore and higher tax recovery, Das said, adding, the department should try to reduce tax litigation and avoid frivolous cases.

Speaking during the occasion, Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) RK Tiwari said the department will make utmost efforts to achieve the tax collection targets fixed as it has achieved more than 100 per cent targets during the last financial year as well.

The revised targets for 2013-14 was ₹6,36,318 crore while actual collection was ₹6,38,495 crore.

He also said that the direct tax collections in the last 10 years have grown over 600 per cent.

The direct tax (including personal income tax and corporate tax) collections in 2003-04 was ₹10,50,88 crore compared to ₹6,38,495 crore in 2013-14.

Enumerating details of various steps taken to augment revenue collections, Tiwari said, the department monitors tax payments by entities covered under MAT provisions, harnessing impact of revenue augmenting legislation in recent years among others.

The Statesman

Date: 22/07/2014
Page No. 11

REVENUES TO EXCEED TARGET

ARUN JAITLEY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT DIRECT TAX COLLECTION IN FISCAL 2014-15

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi, 21 July

Union finance minister Arun Jaitley today expressed optimism that revenue targets for direct taxes for fiscal 2014-15 would not only be met but also be surpassed and called for efforts to unearth black money from within the country.

Stating that the government is making all efforts to bring back the black money stashed abroad, Mr Jaitley asked all senior officers to focus on unearthing black money from within the country which is also quite large.

Direct tax collections target during the current fiscal has been set at Rs 7,36,221 crore. The finance minister said in order to achieve this target, officers of the income tax department will have to work with highest standard of ethics. The credibility of the department is its biggest asset, Mr Jaitley said, while addressing senior officers of the income tax department after inaugurating the two-day annual conference of Principal Chief commissioners, Principal Directors General, Chief Commissioners and Directors General of Income Tax here.

He said the job of the officers of the I-T department is very difficult as they have to achieve the tax collection targets and on the other hand they have to play the role of tax facilitator for the assessee.

The finance minister said officers are duty bound to work in a non-adversarial, non-intrusive, transparent and fair manner, yet they have to deal firmly with those trying to evade taxes.

Mr Shaktikanta Das, revenue secretary, said the

HIGH HOPES

In order to achieve the revenue target, officers of the income tax department will have to work with highest standard of ethics

ARUN JAITLEY
UNION FINANCE MINISTER

focus and efforts of the officers of the department should be to reduce tax arrears (which are to the tune of Rs 4 lakh crore) and raise tax recovery. He also asked them to reduce tax litigation and avoid frivolous and avoidable litigation.

Mr RK Tiwari, chairman of CBDT, said the officers of the department will make the utmost efforts to achieve the tax collection targets fixed for them. They achieved more than 100 per cent of the target during the last financial year as well. Revised direct tax collection target for the last financial year (2013-14) was Rs 6,36,318 crore while actual collection was Rs 6,38,495 crore ~ 100.34 per cent of the revised target, he said.

Mr Tiwari said direct tax collections in the last 10 years have grown over 600 per cent. Direct tax collection in fiscal 2003-04 was Rs 1,05,088 crore while it stood at Rs 6,38,495 crore in fiscal 2013-14.

He said direct tax to GDP ratio was 5.62 per cent during 2013-14 as compared to 5.52 per cent during 2012-13. Similarly, direct tax year-to-year buoyancy was 1.16 in 2013-14 as compared to 1.07 during 2012-13.

Mr Tiwari enumerated in details the various steps taken to augment revenue collections, including monitoring of advance tax payments by top taxpayers, monitoring tax payments by entities covered under MAT/AMT provisions, appropriate action to tackle default/deferment of payments of TDS/self assessment tax, harnessing impact of revenue augmenting legislation in recent years among others.

The Statesman

Date: 22/07/2014
Page No. 11

INDIA WASTES ₹440B WORTH OF VEGETABLES, FRUITS: APEDA

New Delhi, 21 July: The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) has estimated that India is losing Rs 440 billion on wastage of fruits and vegetables annually in the absence of temperature control facilities and adequate storage houses.

APEDA's chairman-cum-secretary, Mr Santosh Kumar Sarangi in his special address at a Logistics Conclave-2014, organised by the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry here today, said India in totality suffered annual losses, amounting to Rs 550 billion due to inadequate cold storages and food processing facilities.

"Only 2 per cent of fresh fruit and vegetables produced in India, which is the second largest producer in the world, are stored in the meagrely available temperature controlled facilities against 85 per cent in the leading economies in the world," he said.

However, he noted that adopting modern techniques for higher fruit and vegetables yield, Jammu & Kashmir in the last three years has been able to substantially curtail its apple wastages. The state has received private and public intervention in this regard.

Mr Dinesh Rai, chairman, Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority (WDRA), said the regulator has been advocating conferment of infrastructure status on logistics, given its key role in an emerging economy. The Planning Commission has already endorsed its view on the subject.

The issue, according to him, is progressing favourably with other concerned departments in the government. SNS

The Tribune

Date: 22/07/2014
Page No. 12

Monsoon rain deficit down to 28%, says Met

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

SHIMLA, JULY 21
Moderate rain occurred at some parts of Himachal as monsoon remained subdued here today and the day temperature also rose by 2 to 3 degrees Celsius.

However, Director of local Met office, Manmohan Singh, said: "Heavy rainfall will occur at isolated places in mid and lower hills from July 23, while moderate to heavy rain is expected over the next 48 hours. The monsoon rain deficit has come down to 28 per cent and will be further reduced after more rain in the coming days."

Shimla and its surrounding areas that were lashed by heavy showers this afternoon received 8 mm rain, while Tinder received 21 mm rain, followed by Jubbal and Renuka 20 mm each, Karsog and Rajgarh 18 mm, Khadrala 17 mm, Kotkhai 15 mm, Sunnibajji 14 mm, Sarahan 12 mm, Arki 10 mm, Palampur and Rohru 8 mm.

The day temperature rose by two to three notches and Una recorded a maximum of 36.2°C, while Sundernagar and Bhuntar recorded a high of 33.5°C followed by Dharamsala 28.6°C, Nahan 28.3°C, Manali 25°C, Shimla 23°C and Kalpa 17.8°C.

The minimum temperature remained close to normal, but key tourist resort in Manali was colder than tribal areas with a low of 12°C, while Keylong and Kalpa in tribal areas recorded a minimum temperature of 12.4°C and 13°C. Nahan recorded a low of 17°C, which was 4.7°C below normal, while Shimla and Solan recorded the minimum temperatures at 15.9°C and 18.8°C, followed by Dharamsala 19.2°C, Palampur 19.7°C, Bhuntar 20.3°C, Sundernagar 22°C and Una 22.7°C.

The periodical rain has brought cheer to farmers as it is beneficial for paddy, maize and apple crops.

The Indian Express

Date: 22/07/2014
Page No. 15

Ministries to share five-year 'deliverable' plans with PMO

PRIYADARSHI SIDDHANTA & SUBHOMOY BHATTACHARJEE
NEW DELHI, JULY 21

FROM NEXT week, ministries will make presentations on select targets suggesting "realistic ways" to achieve them

THE government has decided to ask secretaries of all ministries to share their five-year plans with the Prime Minister's Office instead of letting it be decided by the Planning Commission.

From next week, all Union ministries would make presentations on select targets to Prime Minister Narendra Modi suggesting "realistic ways" to achieve them in the five-year span of the current government and within the available resources.

The exercise will steer clear of figures and graphics and is expected to focus on policy and regulatory hurdles that block each sector and bereft of jargons, an official connected with the exercise said. It is also an indication that there would be no large scale changes at the secretary level in the government, post Budget.

"The ministries will be expected to steer clear from extending sweeping suggestions to difficult issues and would also refrain from giving one-size-fits-all solutions to vexed matters," the official said.

The presentations this time will build on the one organised earlier by the Cabinet secretariat for the Prime Minister. Planning Commission member secretary, Sindhushree Khullar, would vet the presentations first and would also intersperse them with the Plan panel's inputs on the key infrastructure sectors including roads, ports and energy sectors like coal and power.

At least two secretaries told *The Indian Express* that during the earlier round of presentations, the Prime Minister and his team had asked them for feedback, which would now be built into the fresh set.

"The brief is clear. Instead of presenting an omnibus plan that covers everything, we have to focus on a few deliverable ones, only," said one of the secretaries. It will be counterproductive to flag every issue since on each of them the PMO will now ask for regular feedback on progress made. The PM would expect the secretaries to come out with "credible solutions" to the problems of their respective sectors.

Coming after the Union Budget, the secretaries are expected to highlight the financial implications of each project for both lapsable and non-lapsable funds. The social sector ministries are expected to suggest the deliverables for the centrally-funded programmes and ways to achieve them in a time-bound manner. While regulatory and dispute resolution issues would dominate the presentations of infrastructure ministries, the PMO it is expected would ask them to cut down costs.

For instance, the finance ministry is expected spell out the contours of 3P India, an institution, which he promised in the Budget to provide support to mainstreaming PPPs (public-private partnerships) with a corpus of Rs 500 crore. Secretaries from the ministries of power, railways, road transport, shipping, civil aviation, coal and petroleum have been asked to be present during the presentations.