

ONGC Mt Kanchenjunga Expedition 2018 flagged off by Dharmendra Pradhan

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the ONGC Mt Kanchenjunga Expedition

here recently.

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climbing and 3 base camp members including a doctor, has been selected for Mt. Kanchenjunga Expedition 2018. Located at an elevation of 8586 m on the border of Sikkim (India) and Nepal, Mt Kanchenjunga, has been rated as one of the World's Toughest and most Challenging Mountains to climb.

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जल्द शुरू होगी नए सिरे से पवनहंस की बोली

नई दिल्ली | उड्डयन मंत्रालय ने सरकारी हेलीकॉप्टर सेवा कंपनी पवनहंस में विनिवेश की पुरानी बोली प्रक्रिया रद्द कर दी है। नए सिरे से बोली जल्द शुरू होगी। पवनहंस में 51% हिस्सेदारी सरकार और शेष 49% ओएनजीसी की है। पिछले साल अक्टूबर में जारी बोली प्रक्रिया में केवल एक वैध बोली लगी थी।

Modi and Oli reboot ties with infra push

India Will Build Cross-Border Rail Link To Check China

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New Delhi : Moving to actively counter China's infrastructure 'offensive', India will build a crucial cross-border rail link between Kathmandu in Nepal and Raxaul in India, connecting the Himalayan nation to the Indian rail system, while separate inland waterways could give the landlocked country a route to the sea.

Announcing the decisions after a meeting between PM Modi and Nepal's newly elected PM K P Sharma Oli, Indian foreign secretary Vijay Gokhale said the rail link project should be a "game changer" in Indo-Nepal ties. The two nations agreed to speed up three pending cross-border rail links and complete two others this year.

A joint statement said developing waterways was a "landmark" decision that will facilitate movement of cargo, within the framework of trade and transit arrangements, and provide additional access to sea for Nepal. "This new initiative would enable cost effective and efficient movement of cargo," it said.

The cooperation on waterways is significant in the light of previous political hurdles to cooperation in river projects despite several Nepal rivers draining into India and the potential to exploit hydel power and check environmental damage due to flooding and maintaining ecological



PM Narendra Modi welcomes his Nepalese counterpart K P Oli and his wife Radhika Shakya at Rashtrapati Bhavan on Saturday

flows in the lean season.

With Oli's pre-visit comments about Nepal having "two neighbours" clearly indicating he is ready to do business with China, the Indian infrastructure outreach seems intended to more closely enmesh Nepalese and Indian economies and ease and expand movement of people and goods at the borders. The Modi-Oli meeting could succeed in erasing some of the bitterness in ties since the border blockade of 2015 due to the Madhesi agitation when Oli was previously PM.

The two countries agreed to speed up implementation of projects in Nepal, a fact borne out by the 2018 Budget in which India raised its outlay for Nepal by 73%. The statement said Modi "assured Oli that India remains committed to strengthening its partnership with Nepal as per the priorities of the government of Nepal".

Oli said, "We want to erect a strong edifice of trust-based relationship between the two close neighbours that we are." Modi reminded Oli that he should in-

clude all sections of Nepalese society. The two PMs inaugurated an integrated check post (ICP) at Birgunj in Nepal and a petroleum product pipeline between Motihari and Amlekhgunj.

Modi accepted an invitation to visit Nepal, and Gokhale said it would happen this year. Modi is expected to inaugurate a couple of Indian hydro-electric power projects there, which have been hanging fire for years.

Interestingly, though China remains in the background in all discussions between or about India and Nepal, foreign secretary Gokhale stressed that China did not feature in discussions between Modi and Oli and neither did the OBOR/BRI (Belt and Road Initiative).

On the Kathmandu-Raxaul rail link, India has committed to completing a survey within a year and an implementation time-line and funding modalities soon after. This is important as China has promised to complete the Xigatse-Keirung-Kathmandu rail link by 2022.

For full report, log on to www.timesofindia.com

HOEC to increase output three-fold

SHINE JACOB

New Delhi, 7 April

Hindustan Oil Exploration Company (HOEC), which has acquired the entire share capital of Geopetrol International this week, has said it is set to increase its net production by more than three-fold from 1,800 barrels of oil equivalent per day (BOE/D) to 8,000 BOE/D in three years.

“Through the acquisition, we have become the largest private sector oil and gas player in the Northeast. From a mere net production of 400 BOE/D in 2016-17, we have increased our production to 1,800 BOE/D in 2017-18 and we are planning to further increase to 8,000 BOE/D by 2020-21,” said P Elango, managing director of

the company. He added that the new acquisition, that includes its entry into the Kharsang oilfield in Arunachal Pradesh, was going to be a game changer for the company.

The company is targeting an overall investment of around \$35 million in the next three years. Elango claims that this will completely be funded through internal sources as HOEC is a debt-free company with a cash balance of ₹1.3 billion.

HOEC is an operator in five onshore and two offshore blocks and in addition to this, it has participating interest in two offshore blocks. A major boost to the company in the last one year was through its production in Dirok field in Assam, in which Indian Oil Corporation and Oil India Ltd are partners.

“We are ramping up production from Assam by drilling two more wells in addition to the existing four. From a production of 2 million cubic feet of gas from the PY-1 field in Bay of Bengal, we expect an increase to 10 million cubic feet by July and increase our net production to 3,600 BOE/D this year,” he added.

In the recently concluded discovered small and marginal field auctions, the company had won a field B-80 in Bombay High, which is expected to bring in around 15 million cubic feet of production by April 2020.

The company has already submitted its field development plan. According to the plan, development of this field will happen in two phases at an overall investment of \$43 million.

TNGCL plans to enlarge green fuel network in Tripura

CORRESPONDENT

AGARTALA, April 7: Aiming to promote clean energy for vehicles, Tripura National Gas Corporation Ltd (TNGCL) is contemplating to install CNG refilling facility in the city here.

Currently, six CNG stations are functioning in the State catering fuel need of about 12,000 autorickshaws and small vehicles. Of the total CNG stations, four are operating in Agartala and its vicinity while remaining two are at Khowai and Udaipur.

Keeping in view the growing demand for clean energy, TNGCL has decided to establish three more CNG stations at Bishalgarh, Bishramganj and Udaipur. "Yes, there is a need of having more CNG stations in the State especially Dhalai, North and South districts. Currently, we are focusing on opening three stations in Bishalgarh, Bishramganj and Udaipur", said Manager (Marketing) of TNGCL Joyjit Chowdhury here on Friday.

He also said, "Since the number of vehicles is on the rise in Agartala, TNGCL plans to install CNG refilling facility in existing city based fuel outlets where space is available". TNGCL also plans to increase piped gas connection to new areas, he added.

"Laying of pipeline has been completed in areas like Governor's House, Lichu Bagan and Barjala – all under Agartala Municipal Corporation (AMC) and gas supply will begin shortly", he stated.

TNGCL has so far covered 35,000 households with piped gas, in the city with a total population of around 4 lakh.

SAVING | MONEY

■ State feels there is no need to pay 9% SGST to AP for bitumen

TS not to procure bitumen from AP

MADDY DEEKSHITH | DC
HYDERABAD, APRIL 7

The Telangana state government has decided to not procure bitumen from Andhra Pradesh in order to save ₹60 crore on State Goods and Services Tax (SGST).

The Telangana state government annually spends about ₹500 crore on the maintenance of roads within the limits of the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC). It procures bitumen from the Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) refinery in Visakhapatnam, for which it pays nine per cent SGST, which amounts to about ₹60 crore per annum.

According to highly-placed sources, engineers from various government departments and Bonthu Rammohan, the Mayor of the city, recently visited the BPCL head office in Mumbai and asked officials to supply them bitumen from the refinery in Miyapur instead.

BPCL officials explained the benefits of using modified bitumen, and how it produced more durable roads. They also suggested that crumb rubber-modified bitumen and polymer-modified bitumen would be better suited for city roads and agreed to supply those varieties of bitumen from the refinery in Hyderabad.

Bitumen that is used to lay roads has to be maintained at a particular tem-



■ The TS government annually spends about ₹500 crore on the maintenance of roads within the limits of the GHMC.

₹750 crore was earmarked for the development of roads in 2018-19

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perature. A senior GHMC official, on condition of anonymity, said that after conducting various studies they had come to the conclusion that the efficacy and quality of bitumen were reduced during its

transport from Visakhapatnam to Hyderabad. He said that poor quality of bitumen was causing roads to become damaged more quickly, creating problems for commuters.

The official said that the

state government felt that there was no need to pay nine per cent SGST to AP when there is a BPCL refinery in Hyderabad. He said that ₹750 crore was earmarked for the development of roads in the 2018-19 financial year, and about ₹100 crore of that would have to be paid to AP as SGST if bitumen is procured from there. He added that the refinery in Hyderabad would be expanded in the future, based on the state's needs.

Mayor Bonthu Rammohan said that the standard and quality of GHMC roads would definitely improve in the near future. He said that the suggestions provided by BPCL officials would be the solution to the problem of bad roads.

भदेसर के भूगर्भ में प्राकृतिक गैस और तेल की संभावना, सरकार करा रही सर्वे

भदेसर क्षेत्र से चित्तौड़गढ़ होते हुए भीलवाड़ा तक 80 किमी एरिये में होगा सर्वे

भास्कर न्यूज़ | चित्तौड़गढ़

जिले में भदेसर सहित कुछ क्षेत्रों में जमीन के सैकड़ों फीट नीचे प्राकृतिक गैस व तेल के भंडार हो सकते हैं। चित्तौड़गढ़ सहित प्रदेश के नौ जिलों में इस तरह की संभावना पर ही सर्वे चल रहा है। एक दर्जन से अधिक गांवों में बोरिंग कर पता लगाया जा रहा है कि नीचे कितनी गहराई पर कितनी मात्रा में गैस या तेल के भंडार हैं।

केंद्र सरकार को कुछ समय पूर्व सैटेलाइट के जरिये ये नक्शा और सूचना मिली थी कि राजस्थान और मध्यप्रदेश के सीमावर्ती जिलों में तेल व गैस के भंडार हो सकते हैं।

भदेसर क्षेत्र में अन्य खनिज भंडार भी

जिले में चित्तौड़गढ़, भदेसर, निंबाहेड़ा, भूपालसागर, राशमी, बेगूं क्षेत्र में प्रचुर खनिज भंडार माना जाता है। निंबाहेड़ा क्षेत्र में बड़ी मात्रा में लाइम स्टोन के भंडार मिले हैं। अब भदेसर क्षेत्र के तेजपुरा, आवरीमाता क्षेत्र में भी सिलिका सैंड के साथ चाइना क्ले, रेड आर्कर, मार्बल मिला है। हट्टीपुरा क्षेत्र में माइंस चालू हो गई है। भूपालसागर क्षेत्र में भी कॉपर बड़ी मात्रा में मिला है।



एमपी के 14 जिलों में हो चुका है सर्वे... भूगर्भ में तेल और प्राकृतिक गैस की खोज के लिए राजस्थान से सटे मध्यप्रदेश के 14 जिलों में सर्वे कार्य हो चुका है। राजस्थान में इसकी शुरुआत चित्तौड़गढ़ जिले के भदेसर क्षेत्र से की गई है। बांसवाड़ा, भीलवाड़ा, झालावाड़, बारां, कोटा, प्रतापगढ़, सवाई माधोपुर, डूंगरपुर व बूंदी में भी सर्वे के आदेश हैं।