



ONGC News as on 20 December 2023 (Print)

HIGH COURT HEAT ON ONGC

Bench terms cancellation of recruitment for paramedical posts unjust

FPJ NEWS SERVICE /
AHMEDABAD

The Gujarat High Court has directed the Ministry of Petroleum to take action against Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) authorities for their role in the controversial cancellation of recruitment for paramedical posts in Gujarat, a decision alleged to have been influenced by the ONGC union leaders.

The High Court bench, in a scathing observation, highlighted the deprivation faced by the petitioners, slamming the ONGC's actions as arbitrary and unjust. The court mandated that the authorities compensate the affected petitioners by initiating payment of their respective post salaries, effective from the date the petitions were filed.

Petitioners Dipendra Singh Thakur and several others challenged the unilateral move by ONGC in axing the recruitment for paramedical posts. Their outcry found resonance in the Gujarat High Court, prompting a closer examination of the contentious decision.

The roots of this dispute trace back to the recruitment drive initiated by ONGC, inviting applications in 2019 for non-executive roles, specif-



ically in the paramedical domain. Advertisements were circulated, highlighting 35 vacancies encompassing roles like pharmacists Grade-IV, Allopathy Nurses Grade-IV, and junior health attendants.

However, the saga took a contentious turn when ONGC rejected certain applicants' submissions, citing a lack of domicile certificates. Undeterred, the aggrieved candidates took their grievances to court, which ruled in their favor, compelling ONGC to continue with the recruitment process.

Despite this directive,

ONGC faced internal pressure from established unions raising concerns about the existing contractual paramedics. These unions, pushing for a halt in the recruitment drive for regular paramedical positions, compelled the ONGC authorities to abruptly cancel the process via an order issued on February 1, 2022.

The fallout from this decision landed squarely in the Gujarat High Court, which, after a thorough evaluation, deemed ONGC's actions as arbitrary and injudicious. The court's ruling stands not only

as a rebuke to the unilateral cancellation but also as a call for accountability within the ONGC hierarchy.

"This victory in court is not just for us, but for fairness and transparency in recruitment processes. We hope this sets a precedent for respecting due procedures," said Thakur. "The ramifications of this ruling are poised to reverberate not only within the ONGC corridors but also in the wider landscape of recruitment procedures, underscoring the imperative of adherence to fair practices in such processes" he said.

Firm global trends push markets to fresh highs

Nifty, Sensex hit record highs for the 10th time out of 13 sessions in December

Reuters

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BENGALURU: Benchmark Nifty ended higher on Tuesday, reversing course from a subdued start, led by energy stocks after the federal government announced a windfall tax cut.

The NSE Nifty 50 index gained 0.16% to 21,453.10 points, while the BSE Sensex settled 0.17% higher at 71,437.19 points.

Both the Nifty and Sensex hit record highs for the tenth session out of the 13 sessions of trade in December so far.

Energy, the third-heaviest sectoral index on the benchmark, rose 1.58% after the government cut a windfall tax on petroleum crude and diesel and on steady power demand.

Coal India, NTPC were among the top Nifty gainers.

Oil & Natural Gas Corporation, Oil India, Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals and Chennai Petroleum Corporation



The Nifty has risen 6.56% in December, and is on course for its best month since July 2022. MINT

climbed between 0.75% and 6.5%.

Nestle India added 4.66% to a record high after fixing a record date for its stock split. The stock also powered the consumer index 1.41% higher.

The information technology index lost about 1%, snapping a recent rally. The index has gained 8.5% in December so far, including Tuesday's losses.

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"While the outlook for Indian markets remains positive, we are entering a lull period, the foreign inflows and trading volumes will

go down in the second half of December," said Aishvarya Dadheech, founder and chief investment officer at Fident Asset Management. "The Nifty will likely consolidate near current levels till the end of 2023."

Asian markets were subdued after the Bank of Japan left its outlook and ultra-easy monetary policy unchanged.

Reliance Industries, the second-heaviest stock in the Nifty, gained about 1.5% to hit a four-month high on block deals.

Zee Entertainment Enterprises lost 3.14% after Sony said it has not yet agreed to a merger deadline extension.

Day trading guide

21529 » Nifty 50 Futures

S1	S2	R1	R2	COMMENT
21460	21400	21600	21800	Go long only above 21600. Stop-loss can be placed at 21770

₹1653 » HDFC Bank

S1	S2	R1	R2	COMMENT
1640	1615	1670	1705	Go long on dips at 1645. Keep the stop-loss at 1635

₹1557 » Infosys

S1	S2	R1	R2	COMMENT
1540	1515	1570	1590	Go short now and at 1565. Keep the stop-loss at 1580

₹456 » ITC

S1	S2	R1	R2	COMMENT
455	452	458	460	Can go either way from here. Avoid trading this stock

₹200 » ONGC

S1	S2	R1	R2	COMMENT
199	197	203	205	Take fresh long positions now. Keep the stop-loss at 198

₹2558 » Reliance Ind.

S1	S2	R1	R2	COMMENT
2550	2530	2575	2600	Initiate fresh long positions with a tight stop-loss at 2540

₹656 » SBI

S1	S2	R1	R2	COMMENT
653	650	660	665	Go long only above 660. Stop-loss can be placed at 659

₹3812 » TCS

S1	S2	R1	R2	COMMENT
3790	3730	3845	3900	Go short on a break below 3790. Keep the stop-loss at 3805

S1, S2: Support 1 & 2; R1, R2: Resistance 1 & 2.



Publication : Deccan Chronicle	Editions : Chennai
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OIL CONTENT IN WATER HAS FURTHER REDUCED: CPCL

Chennai, Dec 19: The Chennai Petroleum Corporation Ltd on Tuesday said the clean-up operations at the Ennore Creek was going on in full swing leading to further reduction in oil in the water.

About 240 trained manpower along with 125 boats, oil skimmers, pressure jet cleaning machines, containment and absorbent booms are currently engaged in clearing of oil slick at the creek, CPCL said in an update.

"Containment booms of

about 1,500 mts have been installed in eight locations and are being regularly monitored. In these areas, six oil skimmers have been deployed. However, the oil content in the water has further reduced," the subsidiary of IndianOil Corporation said in a statement.

An oil slick has been formed near the Ennore Creek located in north Chennai due to flooding and heavy rains triggered by cyclone Michaung in the state capital and neighbouring districts.

The CPCL said the mechanised cleaning efforts in three out of the five shore areas have been 'successfully' completed and cleaning of affected houses are also being carried out using machinery.

Around 24,000 absorbent pads and 1,000 absorbent socks have been used for removal of oil traces from water surface, the company said.

Three mobile units were deployed in the locality benefitting 2,700 individuals so far, the statement added.

—PTI

MRPL firms up green aviation fuel plans

Aneesh Phadnis
Mumbai

Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd (MRPL) is gearing up to produce sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) in two years to support the government's one per cent blending target.

While Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) plans to start the country's first commercial-scale SAF plant at Panipat by 2026, MRPL is setting up 20-kilolitre-per-day plant to demonstrate indigenously-developed technology.

The MRPL management is in the process of taking necessary board approvals for the

construction of the SAF plant, said Sanjay Varma, who holds additional charge of managing director, MRPL.

Subsequently, it will take about two-and-a-half years for setting up the plant at an estimated cost of around ₹450 crore, Varma added. MRPL has also undertaken a survey with subject matter experts to identify sources for the required quantities of feed for target SAF production including scale up at a later date.

Last month, the National Biofuels Coordination Committee, chaired by Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri announced one per cent SAF blending target for international flights in 2027. This

will be enhanced to two per cent in 2028. IOC will use LanzaJet's alcohol-to-jet technology to produce SAF in a 50:50 joint venture. MRPL is relying on CSIR-Indian Institute of Petroleum's single-step process that converts used cooking oil or palm waste to produce SAF.

CSIR-Indian Institute of Petroleum has produced more than 14,000 litres of SAF on a pilot basis in Dehradun and the fuel has been approved for use in Indian Air Force aircraft with a 10 per cent blend since 2021.

The process for securing the ASTM International certification is underway. Once approved, the fuel can be used by airlines.

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AWARD—THDCIL
THDCIL, applauds Ms. Arushi, a student of Class 7th on bagging the First Prize in the National Level Painting Competition organized by Bureau of Energy Efficiency under the aegis of M/o Power, in New Delhi. THDCIL, a leading Power Entity of Ministry of Power is the Nodal agency for the State of Uttarakhand. Preceding this National Level Event, State-Level competitions took place nationwide.

AWARD—KRIBHCO
KRIBHCO has won 3 awards at the FAI Annual Seminar. Video Film titled "Samridhi Ki Nayi Raah" a film on "Agriculture Waste Management" received the 1st Prize in video film category, also received the Award on Production, Promotion & Marketing of Biofertilizers/Organic Fertilizers/City Compost. KRIBHCO Fertilizer plant, Hazira won runner up award for "Environmental Protection in the nitrogenous fertilizers plants category".

COMPETITION—CISF
On 15.12.2023, final round of 28th CAPF Debate Competition-2023 on "Human Rights are Independent of Duties" was organized by RPF under the aegis of NHRC at National Rail Museum, Chanakyapuri New Delhi, wherein 06 teams of CAPFs, which qualified for the final round participated. CISF emerged as the undisputed champion, clinching the prestigious Overall Best Team Rolling Trophy.

INAUGURATION—NBT
The Pune Book Festival has put Pune on the international stage and it is for the citizens of Pune to make it a success," said Chandrakant Patil, M/o Higher & Technical Education, Textiles, Parliamentary Affairs of Maharashtra, while inaugurating Pune Book Festival 2023 at Fergusson College. Prof. M Marathe, Chairman NBT-India was happy to note that the citizens of Pune had come in large numbers to be part of the event.

INAUGURATION—NAINITAL BANK
Nikhil Mohan, MD & CEO of Nainital Bank had Inaugurated Newly Renovated Branch at Kanher Khera, Meerut UP recently. Nainital Bank Ltd.'s 168 branches are operating in five states i.e. Uttarakhand, UP, Delhi, Haryana and Rajasthan. Recently Nainital Bank tied up with SMC Global Securities limited, this tie-up will offer an integrated 3-in-1 account comprising of a Savings, Demat & Trading account.

AWARD—UTDB
In a glittering ceremony held at Kewadriya, Gujarat during the 2 day ATOAI Summit, Uttarakhand was adjudged the Best Adventure Tourism State in the India. The award was received by Sachin Kurve, Secy., Tourism & CEO-UTDB and Col. Ashwini Pundri, Adtl. CEO (Adventure), UTDB. Speaking on the occasion, Kurve said that this award is recognition of the various efforts being taken by the UTDB.

SCHEME—SBI
Under the government's PMJBY scheme, an amount of Rs. 2 lakh was paid to Smt. Ajmeri Khatoun Nominee (after the sudden death of Mohd. Khacheru) by Jamrudpur Community Centre, Greater Kailash branch of SBI. On this occasion, the bank's Regional Manager Ranjan Kumar, Chief Manager Sunil Jindal, Deputy Branch Manager Navin Kumar Srivastava & Naini Rastogi of SBI Life were also present.

INAUGURATION—DTDC
The programme was inaugurated by Smt Niharika Rai, MD & CEO of Delhi Tourism. In her welcome address, Mrs. Niharika Rai commended the efforts of DTDC employees for promotion of tourism in Delhi & encouraged them to work with a great enthusiasm & positive spirit. The highlights of the programme were the performances by DTDC employees & group activities such as tug of war & musical chairs.

CORPORATE BRIEFS

EVENT—ALBANIA NATIONAL DAY RECEPTION
The Honorary Consul General of Albania recently hosted the National Day reception of the Republic of Albania. The Chief Guest was Union MoS for External Affairs & Parliamentary Affairs V. Muraleedharan. Doñan Duçka, Former Advisor to the Prime Minister of Albania also attended the event. The reception was hosted by globally renowned architect Dikshu Kukreja who has been appointed as the Honorary Consul General of the Republic of Albania & his wife Arunima. The event was attended by senior Indian Government Officials, Members of the Parliament, diplomatic corps, business, sports & media. Ambassadors of Morocco, Sweden, Finland, Brazil, Iran, Cuba, Macedonia, Iceland, Bhutan Hungary, and many other nations were greeted with a majestic brass band & later to a cultural performance specially curated by an Indo-European fusion band.

VIGILANCE AWARENESS WEEK—POWERGRID-I
On 3rd Nov 2023 the Valedictory function of the Vigilance Awareness Week was held at POWERGRID, NH-1, RHO, Faridabad in a remarkable manner. During the Valedictory Ceremony, distinguished Chief Guest, Sharad Kumar, DIG, CISF, Faridabad graced the occasion & AK Mishra, ED (NR-I) welcomed the Chief Guest. AK Mishra, ED, NR-I briefed the significance of celebration of Vigilance Awareness Week, as it coincides with the birthday of the Bismarck of India, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel as he represents the best values in the Indian tradition so far as the Governance is concerned. He emphasized the need for the employees to follow the principle of transparency, value of ethics & truthfulness in their life sphere. The art of good governance is based on accountability, responsiveness, & transparency. Digitalization should be adopted extensively to bring in transparency & aid in curbing corruption. The theme of this year's Vigilance Awareness Week was & Say no to Corruption; Commit to the Nation."

COMPETITION—NHPC
Master Awaiz Alam, a participant from the States allotted to NHPC for conducting State/UT level painting competitions was awarded 'Appreciation Prize' under Group 'A' category of National Painting Competition on Energy Conservation 2023. The award recognizes his talent & awareness displayed during the National Level Painting Competition 2023 on Energy Conservation. Master Awaiz Alam is a student from Standard VI of My World Higher Secondary School, Jahangirabad (MP). Master Awaiz Alam received the award at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi on 14.12.2023 during National Energy Conservation Day. President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu was the Chief Guest on the occasion. Master Awaiz Alam received the award from RK Singh, Union Minister of Power, New & Renewable Energy.

REC In recognition of his remarkable leadership in Sustainability initiatives, VK Dewangan, CMD, REC, was conferred with the 'Most Sustainable Maharashtra Leader' award at the World Sustainability Congress held in Mauritius on Dec. 12, 2023. The award was received on behalf of VK Dewangan, ED Mrs. Taruna Gupta & Chief GM R Anbalagan received the award. The award is conferred on individuals & organizations who are doing exemplary work and based on track record of their achievements. The award was presented by Doumeraj Jahageeah, Director Technical Services, Ministry of Energy & Public Utilities, Mauritius & Jabir Ud-din, Head, Governance, Economic Development Board, Mauritius. In response to this esteemed recognition, Vivek Kumar Dewangan conveyed his heartfelt appreciation & said, "It is an absolute moment of pride & honour to receive such an esteemed award on a global platform. I believe it is a recognition of the teamwork at REC.

IRCTC the hospitality & tourism arm of Indian Railways a Mini-Ratna PSU under Ministry of Railways has been playing a pivotal role in upgrading & professionalizing the hospitality services of Indian Railways thereby garnering much appreciation from the passenger fraternity. With its rich experience in handling one of the most important passenger amenities of Indian Railways, IRCTC has been able to strike the right balance in operation & excellence in order to ensure that passengers get the best of catering services in the railway ecosystem. With a team of hospitality qualified professionals and enormous experience in planning & execution of catering projects & multiple services contracts in Railways, IRCTC is now on the road to proliferate in the areas of business beyond Railways for promoting its brand & business across the nation.

NATIONAL ENERGY CONSERVATION DAY — INDIANOIL

On National Energy Conservation Day, President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu, presented the IndianOil National Energy Conservation Awards 2023 to Shrikant Madhav Vaidya, Chairman, & Ms Sukla Mistry, Director (Refineries), IndianOil. RK Singh Union Minister for Power & New & Renewable Energy, Krishan Pal Union MoS for Power & Heavy Industries were part of the galaxy of dignitaries present on the occasion at the award function held in Vigyan Bhawan.

PARTNERSHIP—ICG
The Indian Coast Guard, at the forefront of safeguarding our seas, proudly announces an exclusive partnership with Uber, India's premier ride-sharing app. This collaboration aims to redefine maritime mobility solutions, delivering efficient, reliable, & secure transportation for the official travel & daily commute of ICG officers, staff, & their families nationwide. Through this pioneering alliance, Uber's cutting-edge ride-sharing technology will seamlessly integrate into the operational fabric of the ICG via Uber for Business.

ACADEMICS

PROGRAM—LANCERS INTL SCHOOL
In a dazzling display of cultural unity, Lancers Intl School orchestrated an unprecedented fusion of Korean, Japanese, & Indian cultures. Spearheaded by influential parents in arts, business, & diplomacy, the collaborative effort sought to celebrate the distinctive traditions & heritage of these nations. The event held recently was a testament to the power of cross-cultural exchange.

APPOINTMENT

SAIL SN Gupta, ITS (1992 Batch) has assumed charge of CVO at SAIL. Gupta has an extensive experience of about 30 yrs in various technical & capacity building functions. Having entered the Indian Telecom Service in the 1992 batch, he has spent over 23 yrs specializing in Exchange Installation, Field Operations, Mobile Operations, & Personnel & Training. Gupta served as Director at the Central Vigilance Commission for 5 yrs, contributing to enhancement of vigilance mechanisms within the govt. Additionally, he has spent two yrs as the Chief Vigilance Officer at the Sports Authority of India, where he played a key role in ensuring transparency & integrity in sportsgovernance.

CTS International SOS, a global leader in health, security risk management, and well-being solutions, is pleased to announce the appointment of CT Sadanandan (CTS) as the Senior Advisor for the Indian Subcontinent. In his role, Sadanandan will leverage his extensive experience to address complex challenges in travel risk management, workplace safety, business continuity, organisation resilience, threat intelligence and duty of care.



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HC notice to oil ministry on 'raw deal' to SC, ST dealers

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Hyderabad: The Telangana high court on Tuesday issued notices to the Union petroleum ministry and oil companies like BPCL, HPCL, etc., asking them to respond to the contentions filed in a PIL that charged them with purposefully earmarking unviable areas for SC and ST petrol dealers while reserving commercially viable centres to non-reserved categories.

The PIL was filed by Madari Jayaraju, president of Telangana SC and ST Petroleum Dealers and LPG Distributors Association, who questioned a June 2023 notification issued by the authorities to select as many as 1,975 dealerships all over the state. Of this, 22.5% of dealerships were allotted to the SC and ST categories. Stating that earmarking of areas for them was done in an unscientific manner without proper survey or data, the petitioner urged court to set aside the June 2023 notification.

Appearing for association, senior counsel Palle Nageswara Rao urged bench of Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and Justice J Anil Kumar to direct authorities not to proceed further till case is resolved.

Publication : Business Standard	Editions : New Delhi
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Resolution plans sought for GVK Power subsidiary

The resolution professional (RP) for GVK Gautami Power Ltd, which owns a 471-Mw gas-based power plant in Andhra Pradesh, has sought Expressions of Interest (EoI) from corporate houses, finance firms and asset reconstruction companies (ARCs).

Edelweiss Asset Reconstruction Company, which is the financial creditor, had moved a petition to initiate corporate insolvency resolution process (CIRP) against the troubled

company for allegedly defaulting on payment of ₹1,447 crore debt. This covered the principal and interest. Edelweiss also sought a moratorium and appointment of a resolution professional. The Hyderabad Bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) during its hearing on October 20, 2023, initiated insolvency proceedings against the ailing power unit under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC). **ABHIJIT LELE**

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India to continue to rely on coal until it becomes developed country: Minister

India is committed to meeting the energy needs of its people and will continue to rely on coal power until it achieves developed country status, Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav said. Responding to a question at a press conference, the minister also said India resisted pressure from developed countries to end the use of fossil fuels at the UN climate conference in the UAE. He said India is committed to meeting the

energy needs of its people and this cannot be done by just "importing oil and gas". "While we are increasing our renewable capacity, we will also have to rely on coal power until we achieve the objective of a developed India," he said. India relies on coal for about 70 per cent of its power generation.



PTI

Publication : Business Standard	Editions : Mumbai
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Sustainable debt management on agenda for global green push: NITI Aayog report

Call to regulate credit rating agencies for fair assessments of emerging countries

DHRUVAKSH SAHA
New Delhi, 19 December

Climate financing needs to be stepped up via a number of reforms for the global push for sustainable growth to be fruitful. These reforms include that of multilateral institutions, debt management strategies and regulation of credit rating agencies, the NITI Aayog said in a report on Tuesday.

"Financial safety nets need strengthening, bilateral swap lines need to be expanded, and IMF contingency lines invoked to make capital flows safer. Credit rating agencies should also be regulated to ensure fair assessments for emerging countries. Finally, scaling up green financing, especially for regions like Africa, will require innovative policies and tools to drive the global transition to net-zero emissions," the central think-tank's report said.

Creating resilience funds, de-risking platforms, promoting circular economies, joint technological development, enhancing green energy security and transition partnerships are some of the long-term solutions proposed through the conference.

One of the core issues discussed during India's presidency of the Group of 20 (G20) nations was the need for reforms in multilateral development banks (MDBs), particularly in terms of financing of sustainable projects in developing nations.

This includes making special drawing rights (SDR) allocation rule-based and less discretionary, as well as improving the multilateral system. Debt needs to be managed sustainably and transparently, possibly by

establishing a multilateral creditor club and strengthening legal frameworks, it noted.

In its suggestions on the way forward, the report noted that countries in the Global South would need "flexibility missions" to cope with the disproportionate impacts of climate change. This would provide them with the means to adapt and innovate in response to environmental shifts.

The report is in the aftermath of an international policy conference conducted by the central think tank in July, as an official G20 side event. It was to examine prospects and challenges pertaining to green and sustainable growth for the global economy.

In a press briefing in July after the conference, NITI Aayog chief executive officer (CEO) BVR Subrahmanyam had said it was becoming increasingly clear that the bulk of

funding for a green transition will have to come from the private sector.

India could be next global growth engine

With China facing an ageing population, India could step up as the next global growth engine, NITI said in its recommendations on building a more resilient global trading system.

"However, it must address its de-industrialisation and boost its manufacturing sector. Strategies should include enhancing productivity in traditional sectors, creating manufacturing jobs, managing competitive exchange rates, closing infrastructure and logistics gaps, and improving education and skills development," the report said.

According to the report, the current US-China decoupling has led to increased trade and financial protectionism.



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Vikram Solar signs 152 MW module supply contract with NTPC

EOI CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA, DEC 19/--/ Vikram Solar has announced that the signing of a ground breaking order win with the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) to supply 152 MW of high-efficiency Crystalline Bifacial Solar PV Modules at Nokh Rajasthan. This strategic collaboration marks a significant milestone in advancing India's solar mission. The contract, signed falls under the Domestic Content Requirement (DCR) and underscores Vikram Solar's unwavering commitment to sustainable energy initiatives. The modules will power NTPC's ambitious ground-mounted solar project at Nokh Solar Park in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan, sources informed.

Gyanesh Chaudhary, Chairman & Managing Director (CMD) of Vikram Solar, expressed his privilege in collaborating with NTPC on this prestigious project. He stated, "The recent order further accentuates the enduring partnership between Vikram Solar and NTPC. Over the years, Vikram Solar has successfully commissioned multiple solar projects for NTPC. This ongoing collaboration emphasizes the trust NTPC places in Vikram Solar's expertise and commitment to excellence. We reiterate our commitment towards innovation, performance, and customer-centricity. From the 300 MW project in Nokhra to pioneering endeavors like the first floating solar project and airport installations across the country, Vikram Solar continues to drive innovation and contribute significantly to the Indian solar revolution. As India advances towards its green energy goals, we remain optimistic about the opportunities that lie ahead. The company is poised to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of renewable energy in the country and contributing to India's position as a global leader in sustainable practices."



Publication : Financial Express	Editions : New Delhi
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**SUZLON INKS PACT
WITH REC FOR
WORKING CAPITAL**

SUZLON GROUP ON Tuesday said it has executed a definitive agreement with state-owned REC Ltd for securing working capital facilities. Suzlon said it will utilise the facility for meeting working capital requirements for the execution of its current order book and future order pipeline.



Publication : Financial Express	Editions : New Delhi
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NTPC GROUP HITS 300-BU POWER GENERATION MARK

NTPC GROUP ON Tuesday said it has produced 300 billion units (BU) of power so far this fiscal. It is the fastest- ever 300 BU generation, NTPC said in a statement. The milestone was achieved in just 262 days on December 18, 18 days early compared with the last fiscal. **FE BUREAU & AGENCIES**

New plan may see greater pvt role in power transmission

ARUNIMA BHARADWAJ
New Delhi, December 19

THERE IS A need to increase private sector investments in the power generation and transmission sector, Ashish Upadhyaya, special secretary in the power ministry, said on Tuesday. "We have to unleash our potential of private sector in generation and transmission, both infrastructure areas," Upadhyaya said, addressing the CII South Asia Power Summit.

Speaking at the summit, Srikant Nagupalli, additional secretary in the power ministry, said there is a need for a comprehensive transmission plan and fast-tracked construction of transmission lines.

The construction of transmission lines has been an issue in the country's power sector for a long time now. Additionally, the share of private companies in building infrastructure for the transmission lines is very low.

India has achieved only 61.5% of its target on expanding power transmission lines in the first half of the fiscal, data from the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) showed.



State-owned Power Grid owns and operates the bulk of inter-state and inter-regional transmission projects in the country

In April-October, the country set up 7,026 circuit kilometre (ckm) of transmission lines, against the target of 11,420 ckm, according to the CEA's executive summary for October. The government has set a target of completing 16,602 ckm transmission lines for the current fiscal.

"There is a mismatch in addition of transmission lines and RE capacity. This has been an issue for a long

time now," said Indu Shekhar Chaturvedi, former renewable energy secretary and director-general of Electric Power Transmission Association (EPTA). "RE capacity has been added by the developer, but the transmission lines are not ready yet."

The country so far has set up 479,185 ckm of transmission network and as per the data provided by the EPTA, 38% of transmission lines have been set up by the Centre, 54% by state governments, and a meagre 8.5% by private players.

Experts attribute the lower share of private sector contribution in the transmission segment to the lesser number of projects awarded to them through tariff-based competitive bidding (TBCB).

Power Grid Corporation owns and operates the bulk of inter-state and inter-regional transmissions in the country. In the current fiscal, Power Grid has bagged 63% of the transmission projects awarded through TBCB, while the private firms' share was far behind at 37% with project costs amounting to ₹12,179 crore, Chaturvedi said.

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Govt approved 50 solar parks in 12 states: R K Singh

BLOOMBERG



New Delhi: A total of 50 solar parks with a combined capacity of 37,490 MW have been approved in 12 states till 30 November, Parliament was informed on Tuesday. The government is implementing the Development of Solar Parks and Ultra Mega Solar Power Projects scheme with a target capacity of 40 GW, minister of new and renewable energy R.K. Singh said.

PTI

Solar energy to help save ₹1,000 cr in power purchase bill annually: Sukhu

5-day winter session begins in Dharamsala, no confrontation between Cong, BJP on Day 1



ASSEMBLY IN SESSION

LALIT MOHAN
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

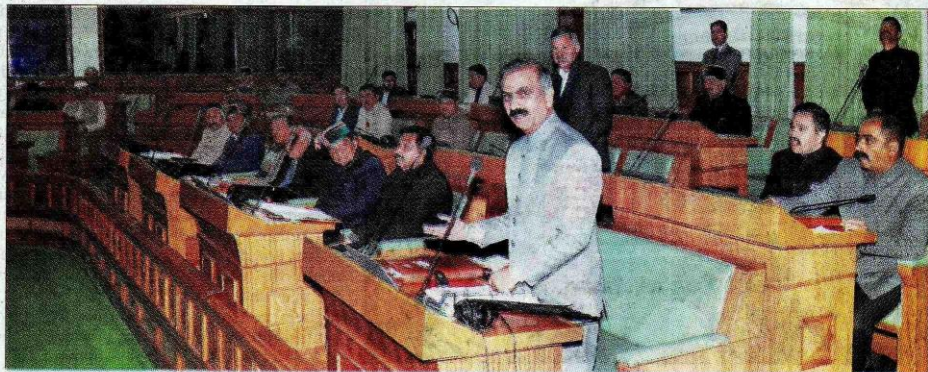
DHARAMSALA, DECEMBER 19
The five-day winter session of the 14th Vidhan Sabha started at the Assembly complex at Tapovan in Dharamsala today. The security in the Assembly complex was beefed up following the recent security breach in Parliament.

The proceedings started with the House paying homage to BJP MLA from Chamba, BK Chauhan. A two-minute silence was also observed to show respect to the late MLA.

The first day of the winter session ended without a major confrontation between the ruling and opposition members. The House was conducted smoothly with both ruling and opposition members participating in debates actively.

Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu tabled five bills, which were passed by the Assembly during the monsoon session and had also got the assent of the Governor. The House debated the issue of the stoppage of a passage to the 'Gausadan' in Nurpur raised by BJP MLA Ranvir Nikka.

Sukhu, while participating in the debate over tapping of renewable energy sources in the state, said that the government would change the energy policy to make



Chief Minister Sukhvinder Sukhu addresses the House on the first day of the winter session in Dharamsala on Tuesday.

STOP WOOD EXPORT

■ Dehra MLA Hoshiyar Singh stressed the need for completely stopping wood export from the state and its use as biomass. The government should exploit geo-thermal, bio-gas and wind power at a large scale, he said.

PROMOTE SOLAR POWER

■ Mandi (Sadar) MLA Anil Sharma said that there was need to promote solar energy at a large scale on barren land in the state so that the youth get employment near their homes and electricity production also increases.

STRENGTHEN OUTPUT

■ Newly inducted Cabinet Minister Rajesh Dharmani said that Himachal Pradesh should strengthen its energy production so that it did not have to purchase electricity at high rates from other states during the winter.

WATER CESS

■ Trilok Jamwal, BJP MLA from Bilaspur, opposed the cancellation of the 800 MW power projects by the government. He said that it was wrong to impose water cess on the projects, the MoUs for which were signed years ago.

Himachal self-reliant. "The government aims to harness 500 MW of solar energy by December next year. During winter, Himachal purchases electricity from neighbouring states at expensive rates. By achieving the set target of solar energy production, the government will save Rs 1,000 crore on electricity purchase every year," he added.

Sukhu said that the state's largest 32 MW solar power plant would be established at Pekhuwala in Una district in the next four months. "The government aims to make Himachal a green energy state by 2026. For this, solar

energy is being exploited increasingly. The government is giving 50 per cent subsidy on the purchase of electric vehicles. Under the Rajiv Gandhi Start-up Scheme, 50 per cent subsidy will be given to the youth to purchase e-vehicles under the scheme. The government is also working to exploit phosphorus energy," he added.

He accused the BJP of ignoring the interests of the state. "The BJP government gave the Luhri-Sunni and Dhaula Siddh power projects to the SJVN on easy terms but

our government would either withdraw these projects or hand these over to the SJVN on its own terms. The Centre also created hurdles in the recovery of water cess. State BJP leaders should take up the water cess issue with its central leadership," he added.

Leader of the Opposition Jai Ram Thakur said, "The Chief Minister is making wrong statements on the issue of water cess. Even in Uttarakhand and J&K, water cess is not being collected from Central projects. The letter of the Central Government was for all states and not for Himachal alone," he added.

Earlier, Chaitanya Sharma, Congress MLA from Gagret (Una), said the Chief Minister's vision to make Himachal a green state and promote renewable energy would lead to the promotion of e-vehicles.

Hansraj, BJP member from Churah, said, "We are discussing renewable energy because we have failed to ensure proper energy production. The state has immense hydro power potential, then why there is a discussion on energy generation from other sources. We are talking about solar energy but there are many problems in this sector also. How the waste generated from solar energy will be disposed of after 20 years?"