



ONGC News as on 25 June 2024 (Print)

Publication : Deccan Chronicle	Editions : Chennai
Date :25 June 2024	Page : 16

ONGC DONATES BINOCULAR MICROSCOPES TO TIRUVARUR TB ASSN

R. VALAYAPATHY | DC
TIRUVARUR, JUNE 24

ONGC has donated 20 binocular microscopes, costing Rs. 6.84 lakh, under its community social responsibility scheme, to the Tuberculosis Association of Tiruvarur district, according to Collector T. Charusree.

She said soon after handing over the equipment to Dr. Pugazh, assistant director of the TB Association, in the presence of ONGC principal general manager and HR head, Ganesan, here on Monday.

She said the equipment will be utilised at the primary health centres at Adiyakkamangalam, Kottarakkudi, Koothanallur, Ullikkottai, Thaliyayamangalam, Needamangalam, Kovivelli, Vaduvur, Perumpnaiyur, Kudavasal, Thiruveezimalai, Peralam, Velangudi, Valangaiman, Alangudi, Kankoduthavanitham, Edaiyur Sangenthi, Korukkai, Vilakkudi and Adichapuram.

Publication : Financial Express	Editions : Chennai
Date : 25 June 2024	Page : 5

MOZAMBIQUE

49th Independence Day Anniversary

ADVERTISEMENT

Mozambique-India relations: From historic maritime ties to robust modern partnerships

Anchored in centuries-old connections, the Mozambique-India bilateral relations are a testament to the enduring bonds of friendship and cooperation strengthening diplomatic, economic and cultural ties for a promising shared future



FROM DEEP HISTORICAL TIES TO EXEMPLARY DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS
Connectivity by the vast expanse of the Indian Ocean stretching between South and Africa's scenic Mozambique and India on which countless traders voyaged since the late medieval period throwing open access to a treasure trove of culture, exchanges while strengthening people-to-people connections, efficiency and the foundation of friendly ties centuries ago that have deepened with the tide of time.

The deep-rooted historical connection, dating back to ancient maritime trade routes across the Indian Ocean, was strengthened further with independent India's unrelenting support for the Mozambican freedom struggle, fostering warm political ties between the countries' leadership. The Republic of India recognised the Republic of Mozambique shortly after its independence in the epoch-making year of 1975, and was one of the first countries to set up a diplomatic mission in Mozambique, marking the beginning of longstanding fruitful diplomatic relations between the countries, enriched by frequent high-level visits and exchanges. Since then, the bilateral relationship centered on ever-deepening engagement across sectors has received significant impetus through a wide spectrum of areas. While all four Mozambican Presidents have visited India boosting this partnership, and highlighting a mutual commitment to fostering closer ties, former Indian PM Indira Gandhi visited the culturally diverse Mozambique in August 1982 and PM Narendra Modi in July 2016.

In recent times, during Mozambican President Filipe Nyusi's visit in January 2024 for the Vizant Gujarat Summit, where he met PM Modi, both leaders held productive discussions on furthering bilateral ties on several areas.

ECONOMIC & TRADE COOPERATION
Economic relations between Mozambique and India have grown robustly, driven by trade, investment, and development cooper-

tion. As of April 2024, alongside the presence of over 50 Indian companies in Mozambique, India investments in the country had risen to a value of approximately \$10 billion. Indian companies have invested heavily in Mozambique's energy resources, with the most important investments emerging in the natural gas and coal industries. ONGC Videsh and Oil India have invested significantly in Mozambique's Rovuma Basin gas fields, which are among the largest natural gas reserves in the world. From Indian companies' involvement in the mining of rubies and gemstones to various Indian investments in commercial agriculture and the presence of

The partnership between Mozambique and India is poised to deepen as they navigate 21st Century challenges and opportunities

Tata and Mahindra in the automobile sector of Mozambique, there has been a surge in Indian companies' interest in investing in various sectors in the country, including information technology, education, healthcare, electricity and pharmaceuticals. Furthermore, at the Mozambique-India Business Forum held in January 2024, Mozambican President Filipe Nyusi shared potential investors that the country offers excellent opportunities for FDI, highlighting the agricultural and electricity sectors as the most promising. In addition to investment, bilateral trade has seen a steady increase, with Indian exports to Mozambique valued at \$208.47 million and Mozambique exports to India at \$621.36 million for the FY 2022-23. While India's imports from Mozambique comprise coal, natural gas, cashew nuts, and raw agricultural products, India's exports to Mozambique include refined petroleum products, engineer-

ing goods, pharmaceuticals, rice, fabrics, medicines, knifes, plastic and footwear. The future looks promising in light of proactive and regular exchange between Mozambique and Indian Chambers of Industry and Businessmen of both countries enthusiastically participating in trade fairs and commercial events in each other's countries.

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Development cooperation is a cornerstone of the Mozambique-India relationship. India has extended substantial support to Mozambique through concessional lines of credit (LoC) and grants. The EXIM Bank of India has provided several lines of credit to Mozambique, financing diverse projects—provision of drinking water, improving power generation and distribution, improving agricultural productivity, rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure, creation of an Information Technology Park, construction of an assembly hall for solar cells, and manufacturing railway equipment.

The most conspicuous form of development partnership extended by India to Mozambique has been the steadily increasing number of scholarships and training opportunities in India to help enhance human resources within Mozambique while bolstering people-to-people ties between both nations, underscoring educational cooperation as another key aspect of the bilateral relationship.

BRIDGING CULTURES

Against the backdrop of almost 20,000 Mozambican nationals tracing their ancestry to India and around 5000 Indian nationals in the country engaged in various Indian companies or working as professionals in Mozambican companies, cultural ties between Mozambique and India are vibrant, reflecting a deep understanding and appreciation of the heritage and traditions of both countries. The Indian diaspora in Mozambique plays a significant role in cultural exchanges, celebrating Indian festivals and promoting Indian arts and cuisine.

TOWARDS GREATER HEIGHTS

The future of Mozambique-India relations looks promising, with both countries keen on expanding their cooperation into new areas, opening more avenues for mutual support.

The strategic partnership between Mozambique and India is poised to deepen as they navigate 21st Century challenges and opportunities. Their shared commitment to democracy, development, and regional stability ensures resilience and dynamism. With a strong foundation of historical ties and sectoral cooperation, this partnership is set to achieve greater heights and contribute to each country's prosperity.

MESSAGE

H.E. ERMINDO AUGUSTO FERREIRA High Commissioner of the Republic of Mozambique to India



THE 25th of June, National Independence Day, is a distinctive occasion of great celebration and joy for Mozambicans, as it is the repository of the nation's most sublime values that carries with it a profound meaning in the life of every Mozambican and represents the milestone of our sovereignty.

The date is not only a unique occasion to which we remember the past, the long and arduous struggle and the sacrifices made by Mozambicans. This date also draws our attention to the continuing need not to lose heart in the face of the complex challenges we face in nation building.

As we have always said, our cultural mosaic is our strength and inexhaustible wealth. Only by valuing diversity and working together will we succeed in building a resilient and progressive nation.

There have been many gains from our independence that today, fill us with pride, which is why we have taken on the duty of carrying on with national development in favour of the well-being and happiness of all Mozambicans.

Mozambique is a country with economic potential in agriculture, mining and manufacturing, and the provision of services, including transport and tourism. Mozambique is now known as a country with enormous energy potential, including one of the largest natural gas reserves in the world, in the Rovuma Basin. The country boasts large reserves of heavy sands, as well as other mineral resources of high commercial value, including diamonds and precious stones.

The Republic of Mozambique's investment legislation creates a package of incentives for investors who decide to

invest in the country, particularly in the production of goods and services that create employment opportunities for young Mozambicans and contribute to the country's industrialisation and modernisation process.

In this context, in order to strengthen international cooperation through the creation of productive partnerships that contribute to the rapid acceleration of the country's economic growth and the improvement of the living conditions of our population, we invite businessmen and investors from India and other parts of the world to join Mozambique in the process of its development.

We wish to seize this auspicious occasion to warmly congratulate the Government of India for the peaceful and successful conduct of its recent elections. This achievement not only reinforces India's strong democratic credentials but also serves as an inspiration for democratic governance globally.

Likewise, we wholeheartedly congratulate

the Prime Minister, His Excellency Narendra Modi, and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leading the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) for their electoral success.

On behalf of the government of the Republic of Mozambique, I would like to seize this opportunity to express our gratitude and recognition for the friendship, solidarity and cooperation extended by the Government and people of India to the government and people of Mozambique over the years as an invaluable contribution to our relentless quest for ever higher levels of development.

We stand ready to work towards developing and consolidating further bilateral friendly ties and cooperation between the peoples and governments of India and Mozambique and to boost economic and trade ties between the two nations for their mutual benefit.

As we encourage Mozambican business community to further explore India's market for their products we likewise encourage the India's business community public and private to do the same and also explore investment opportunities in Mozambique, benefiting from fiscal incentives in different sectors, notably agriculture and agro-industry, tourism, infrastructure development, energy, fisheries and aquaculture, industry, mineral resources, health care and pharmaceuticals and banking, among others.

We want and promise an economic partnership in which we all win and together contribute to a better world for ourselves and for future generations.

Long for Mozambique-India relationship!

Jindal Mozambique: Catalyst for economic advancement in Mozambique



As Mozambique approaches its 49th National Day on June 25th, it's a moment to honour the nation's resilience and progress since independence in 1975. At the forefront of this journey stands Jindal Mozambique, symbolising India's steadfast commitment to economic collaboration with Mozambique.

During the coal market's turbulence from 2013 to 2016, Jindal Mozambique showcased adaptability, reinforcing its dedication to sustainable development. This commitment mirrors a shared vision between Jindal and Mozambique for a more progressive future.

JINDAL MOZAMBIQUE
Jindal Mozambique, a subsidiary of Jindal Africa, has become a cornerstone of Mozambique's coal mining sector. With a focus on responsible mining practices, the company drives economic growth while preserving the environment. Its operations stimulate economic development, creating jobs and meeting energy demands both domestically and internationally.

through education, healthcare, and skill development initiatives. Recognising its contributions, Jindal Mozambique optimizes the broader Mozambican partnership.

Investment: Indian firms have injected over \$5 billion into Mozambique's resource sector, bolstering confidence in the nation's potential.

Trade: Bilateral trade peaked at \$2.4 billion in 2017-18, reflecting the robust partnership. India exports petroleum products and pharmaceuticals, while Mozambique reciprocates with coal and cashew nuts.

Development Assistance: India extends support beyond commerce, offering aid for electricity access and COVID-19 relief.

As Mozambique commemorates its National Day, the collaboration with India shines as a beacon of progress. Together, both nations pave the path for inclusive growth and sustainable development. Through initiatives like Jindal Mozambique, the bond strengthens, promising a bright, engaging with local communities.

Day trading guide

23554 » Nifty 50 Futures

S1	S2	R1	R2	COMMENT
23500	23400	23600	23700	Go long only above 23600. Stop-loss can be placed at 23570

₹1672 » HDFC Bank

S1	S2	R1	R2	COMMENT
1640	1615	1680	1730	Go long only above 1680. Keep the stop-loss at 1670

₹1527 » Infosys

S1	S2	R1	R2	COMMENT
1515	1500	1540	1560	Can go either way. Avoid trading the stock for now

₹423 » ITC

S1	S2	R1	R2	COMMENT
421	419	425	428	Go long only above 425. Stop-loss can be kept at 425

₹270 » ONGC

S1	S2	R1	R2	COMMENT
267	264	273	276	Wait for a rise. Go short at 272. Keep the stop-loss at 274

₹2883 » Reliance Ind.

S1	S2	R1	R2	COMMENT
2865	2830	2900	2925	Take fresh shorts below 2865. Keep the stop-loss at 2875

₹833 » SBI

S1	S2	R1	R2	COMMENT
829	824	836	843	Go short now and at 835. Stop-loss can be placed at 837

₹3817 » TCS

S1	S2	R1	R2	COMMENT
3785	3750	3845	3900	Go long on a break above 3845. Keep the stop-loss at 3830

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

MOZAMBIQUE

49th Independence Day Anniversary

Mozambique-India relations: From historic maritime ties to robust modern partnerships

Anchored in centuries-old connections, the Mozambique-India bilateral relations are a testament to the enduring bonds of friendship and cooperation strengthening diplomatic, economic and cultural ties for a promising shared future.



FROM HISTORICAL TIES TO EXEMPLARY DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

Connected by the vast expanse of the Indian Ocean and by the shared maritime Silk Road, Mozambique and India are linked by ancient trade routes and a shared history of development. For centuries, the two nations have been exchanging goods, ideas, and people, laying the foundation for a friendship that has stood the test of time.

The deep-rooted ties between the two nations have led to a series of significant developments over the years. From the early days of trade to the modern era of diplomatic relations, the two countries have worked together to strengthen their bilateral ties. This has led to a series of landmark agreements and initiatives that have shaped the relationship between the two nations.

In recent times, the two nations have taken significant steps to deepen their cooperation. The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on maritime cooperation in 2019 was a landmark event that marked a new chapter in the relationship between the two countries. This MoU covers a wide range of areas, including maritime security, environmental protection, and capacity building. It is a testament to the shared commitment of both nations to strengthen their maritime cooperation and to work together to ensure the sustainable development of the Indian Ocean region.

The MoU is a significant step towards deepening the maritime cooperation between the two nations. It covers a wide range of areas, including maritime security, environmental protection, and capacity building. It is a testament to the shared commitment of both nations to strengthen their maritime cooperation and to work together to ensure the sustainable development of the Indian Ocean region.

The MoU is a significant step towards deepening the maritime cooperation between the two nations. It covers a wide range of areas, including maritime security, environmental protection, and capacity building. It is a testament to the shared commitment of both nations to strengthen their maritime cooperation and to work together to ensure the sustainable development of the Indian Ocean region.

The MoU is a significant step towards deepening the maritime cooperation between the two nations. It covers a wide range of areas, including maritime security, environmental protection, and capacity building. It is a testament to the shared commitment of both nations to strengthen their maritime cooperation and to work together to ensure the sustainable development of the Indian Ocean region.

The MoU is a significant step towards deepening the maritime cooperation between the two nations. It covers a wide range of areas, including maritime security, environmental protection, and capacity building. It is a testament to the shared commitment of both nations to strengthen their maritime cooperation and to work together to ensure the sustainable development of the Indian Ocean region.

The MoU is a significant step towards deepening the maritime cooperation between the two nations. It covers a wide range of areas, including maritime security, environmental protection, and capacity building. It is a testament to the shared commitment of both nations to strengthen their maritime cooperation and to work together to ensure the sustainable development of the Indian Ocean region.

Jindal Mozambique: Catalyst for economic advancement in Mozambique

A Mozambique approached as its 49th Independence Day on June 25th, it's a moment to honour the nation's resilience and progress since independence in 1975. At the forefront of this journey stands Jindal Mozambique, symbolising India's steadfast commitment to economic collaboration with Mozambique.

During the past decade's turbulence from 2013 to 2016, Jindal Mozambique showcased adaptability, resilience, and dedication to sustainable development. This commitment was a shared vision between India and Mozambique to create an inclusive and prosperous future.

Jindal Mozambique, as a subsidiary of Jindal Africa, has become a prominent state of Mozambique's economic growth. With a focus on responsible mining practices, the company aims to ensure sustainable economic development, creating jobs and fostering energy security for the nation.

Mozambique's economic growth is a testament to the partnership between India and Mozambique. The company's commitment to sustainable development, responsible mining, and job creation has been a key driver of economic growth in Mozambique. This partnership is a testament to the shared commitment of both nations to strengthen their bilateral ties and to work together to ensure the sustainable development of the Indian Ocean region.

H.E. ERMINDO AUGUSTO FERREIRA High Commissioner of the Republic of Mozambique to India



On the 25th of June, National Independence Day, is a distinctive occasion of great significance for the Mozambique nation, as it is the reproof of the nation's triumph in the battle that has led it to a profound rearing in the life of every Mozambican and represents the milestone of our sovereignty.

The day is not only a unique occasion as it is the reproof of the nation's triumph in the battle that has led it to a profound rearing in the life of every Mozambican and represents the milestone of our sovereignty.

The day is not only a unique occasion as it is the reproof of the nation's triumph in the battle that has led it to a profound rearing in the life of every Mozambican and represents the milestone of our sovereignty.

The day is not only a unique occasion as it is the reproof of the nation's triumph in the battle that has led it to a profound rearing in the life of every Mozambican and represents the milestone of our sovereignty.

FORWARD GREATER HORIZONS

The future of Mozambique-India relations holds immense promise for both nations. The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on maritime cooperation in 2019 was a landmark event that marked a new chapter in the relationship between the two countries. This MoU covers a wide range of areas, including maritime security, environmental protection, and capacity building. It is a testament to the shared commitment of both nations to strengthen their maritime cooperation and to work together to ensure the sustainable development of the Indian Ocean region.

EMBRACING CULTURES

Agreeing the tradition of around 20,000 Mozambicans and Indians living together in a peaceful and harmonious relationship in Mozambique, the two nations have a long history of cultural exchange and collaboration. This shared heritage is a testament to the enduring bonds of friendship and cooperation between the two nations.

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Development cooperation is a cornerstone of the Mozambique-India bilateral relations. India has provided substantial support to Mozambique through various initiatives, including capacity building, technical assistance, and infrastructure development. This support is a testament to the shared commitment of both nations to strengthen their bilateral ties and to work together to ensure the sustainable development of the Indian Ocean region.

Govt plans to shift focus from disinvestment policy

Rajeev Jayaswal

rajeev.jayaswal@htlives.com

NEW DELHI: The government may review the existing disinvestment policy and shift its focus from selling state-owned companies to prudent public wealth management, supporting not-for-profit enterprises, and ensuring strong presence of state-run firms in strategic sectors, two people aware of the development said.

The Indian economy has become stronger and global economic realities have changed considerably since February 2021 when the government unveiled its Public Sector Enterprise (PSE) Policy for Atmanirbhar Bharat. Hence, a review of the existing policy of 2021 is expected, they added requesting anonymity.

The February 2021 policy was prepared at a time when Covid-19 pandemic had wrecked the global economy. India proposed the policy on February 1, 2021 in the budget with a specific target



Nirmala Sitharaman, Union finance minister.

MINT

of mopping up ₹1.75 crore as disinvestment receipts in the budget estimates (BE) of 2021-22. The target was finally reduced to ₹78,000 crore.

"India's financial position is much better now with robust revenue flows; hence disinvestment proceeds are no longer critical for meeting fiscal deficit targets," one person said.

The 2021 policy that provided a roadmap for disinvestment in all non-strategic and strategic sectors sought to keep the g

presence of central public sector enterprises (CPSEs) to four strategic areas: atomic energy, space and defence; transport and telecommunications; power, petroleum, coal and other minerals; and banking, insurance and financial services.

"In the changed national and global situations, when new challenges are emerging due to rapid technological advancements, a review of the policy is also needed," the first person added.

"The focus of the government is also on maximisation of overall value of PSEs in the nation building rather than giving a specific disinvestment target in the budget to please market analysts," a second person said. A beginning was already made in the revised estimates of 2023-24, which do not show any specific number for disinvestment in 2023-24, he added.

The interim budget for current financial year also has no specific mention of any disinvestment target, and this trend may continue, he said.

Existing CPSEs and new ones would continue to participate in India's economic development along with increased private participation, the second person said, adding that strategic sale of important companies such as Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) will also be reviewed. The sale of BPCL has been on hold since May 2022 after an unsuccessful attempt.

The budget, which is expected in the third week of July, may speak about public asset man-

agement along with disinvestment of non-core businesses and closure of loss-making units, the people mentioned above said. Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who presented the interim budget on February 1 before the general elections, did not mention disinvestment estimates under the head of non-debt capital receipts. While budget estimates for 2023-24 (presented in Parliament on February 1, 2023) had a specific number of ₹51,000 crore as disinvestment receipts, the same was missing in the revised estimate for the same fiscal year.

Industry is, however, keen on government disinvesting CPSEs. In the post budget consultation with revenue secretary Sanjay Malhotra on June 18, the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) proposed a disinvestment push for "revenue augmentation" suggesting the government "adopt a demand-based approach to select PSEs for disinvestment and announce a time bound three-year schedule" for the same.

Masdar, Marubeni among cos eyeing Hygenco stake

Utpal Bhaskar
utpal.b@livemint.com
NEW DELHI

Several companies have evinced interest in acquiring 49% stake in Gurugram-based green hydrogen manufacturer Hygenco Green Energies Pvt. Ltd for an estimated equity value of around \$400 million, two people aware of the development said, with some potential buyers aiming for an even higher stake.

Among the interested parties are UAE's Masdar (Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company), Beijing-headquartered Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and Australia's Macquarie Group, which have signed non-disclosure agreements (NDAs).

Others which have signed NDAs include Japan's Sojitz Corp., Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd (MHI) and Marubeni Corp., World Bank's International Finance Corp.



The estimated equity value of Hygenco's 49% stake is \$400 million. BLOOMBERG

(IFC), private equity firm Actis Llp, and Gentari, a unit of Malaysia's state-run oil and gas company Petrolia Nasional Bhd or Petronas.

Mumbai-based investment management firm Avendus Capital is running the primary equity raise process.

"It's not that everyone who has signed the NDA will submit an NBO (non-binding offer), but there is a significant interest in the transaction," one of the two people cited

above said on the condition of anonymity. "While the process involves a 49% stake sale, there are interested companies who want to acquire as much as 74% in Hygenco Green Energies."

"The next stage of sale process will involve submitting NBOs, after which the short-listed bidders will be taken to the next stage for submitting a binding offer," said the person cited above.

The fundraise will help Hygenco, which plans to develop 10 gigawatt (GW) of production and distribution assets by 2030, complete its portfolio.

"As a matter of policy, Masdar is unable to comment on market speculation," a Masdar spokesperson said in an emailed response.

Spokespersons for Avendus, Marubeni, Actis and IFC declined to comment.

Queries emailed to the

TURN TO PAGE 6

Masdar, Marubeni, AIIB among firms eyeing stake in Hygenco

FROM PAGE 1

spokespersons of Hygenco, AIIB, Macquarie, Sojitz, Mitsubishi and Gentari on late Thursday night remained unanswered till press time.

Green hydrogen is generated by breaking down water in an electrolyzer using renewable power. It can be combined with nitrogen to make ammonia, without using hydrocarbons in the production process. Green ammonia is used to store energy and in fertilizer manufacturing.

India's push to tap green energy sources such as green hydrogen has generated a significant interest among global players. Recently, *Mint* reported that state-run NTPC Ltd's subsidiary NTPC Green Energy Ltd (NGEL) was in talks to supply green hydrogen to state-backed oil refiner and marketer Hindustan Petroleum Corp. Ltd (HPCL) and copper and aluminium maker Hindalco Industries.



India's hydrogen push has got global interest. ISTOCKPHOTO

Malaysia's Gentari also plans to invest \$1.5 billion for 30% stake in AM Green Ammonia Holdings, a unit of AM Green, set up by Greenko Group founders Mahesh Kolli and Anil Kumar Chalamalasetty. AM Green Ammonia will produce 5 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) of green ammonia, which is equivalent to about 1 mtpa of green hydrogen.

Deloitte India in a 20 June report said it expects a "decline

in EV (electric vehicle) adoption post-2045 as greener fuel options such as green hydrogen will become more prevalent and technological advancements will enhance fuel efficiency".

Avendus Capital in a 4 April report added that India offers a \$125 billion investment opportunity across the green hydrogen value chain by 2030.

India has set a target to produce 5 mtpa of green hydrogen by 2030. The Centre launched the national green hydrogen mission last year with an outlay of over ₹19,000 crore, including support for manufacturing electrolyzers and producing green hydrogen.

Several state-run majors such as Indian Oil Corp. Ltd and GAIL Ltd, and private sector firms such as ACME, ReNew Energy, Larsen & Toubro Ltd, Reliance Industries Ltd and the Adani Group have announced plans for green hydrogen production.

Off the disinvestment track, BPCL can now focus on long-term goals

Richa Mishra
Hyderabad

The latest statement by the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri has for the time being put to rest any concerns over disinvestment of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL).

BPCL can now focus on its long-term goals without the immediate pressure of privatisation, ensuring stability for its employees and stakeholders, according to those closely associated with the company.

Soon after taking charge as the Minister for Petroleum & Natural Gas for the second term, Hardeep Singh Puri was quoted as saying the Centre is not in favour of divesting the government's stake in oil marketing companies. Thus, sending a signal of reassurance to the public sector oil companies.

The Centre had planned to sell its entire stake of 52.98 per cent in BPCL, which was expected to fetch ₹45,000 crore in FY22, according to reports. The gov-



ernment had invited expression of interest (EOI), or initial bids, for these in March 2020. The plan was to complete the process by March 2021. But the process came to a standstill as there was just one bidder left in the fray after the other two dropped out due to their inability to tie up funds for the acquisition. The government may have paused the privatisation of BPCL due to several potential reasons including 'Strategic reassessment: Re-evaluating the strategic importance of BPCL in national energy security and profitability' and 'Stakeholder concerns: Addressing concerns from employees and other stakeholders about job security and operation', those in the know said.

According to a source, "The structural changes already made in anticipation

of privatisation was not major and it won't affect much to companies' operations / growth."

An official told *businessline* that "the government's halt on disinvestment clearly means BPCL will continue to operate under public ownership, retaining its existing structure and operational policies."

However, there is a constant uncertainty that the government may just change its plan, another stakeholder said.

CHALLENGES

Talking about the challenges that still exist for the company, an official said, "BPCL still faces several challenges, including: Market competition: competing with private and international players in the oil and gas sector, Operational efficiency: Improving efficiency and reducing costs amid fluctuating global oil prices."

Investment in new businesses/technology: Entering into new business opportunities and investing in new technologies for sustainable growth, another area of focus now, the official added.

Rupee rises 11 paise to close at 83.46 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee appreciated 11 paise to settle at 83.46 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, supported by a positive trend in domestic equity markets and stable global crude oil prices.

Forex traders said a weak US dollar against major rivals overseas on Monday also helped the rupee. However, weak Asian markets and renewed geopolitical tensions in the Middle East capped sharp gains.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.52 and hit the intraday high of 83.44 against

the greenback during the session. It finally settled at 83.46 (provisional) against the dollar, registering a gain of 11 paise from its previous close.

On Friday, the rupee hit the lowest level of 83.63 but finally settled at 83.57 against the dollar. "We expect the rupee to trade with a slight positive bias as strength in the domestic markets and expectations of fresh foreign inflows may support the rupee.

"However, any bounce back in the US Dollar on rising expectations of a further delay in rate cut and safe-haven demand amid geopolitical tensions in the Red Sea region may cap the sharp upside," said



Anuj Choudhary – Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas.

Investors may remain cautious ahead of core PCE data from the US this week. "USD/INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of Rs 83.20 to Rs 83.80," Choudhary added.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading at 105.57, lower by 0.21 per cent. Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, advanced 0.36 per cent to USD 85.55 per barrel.

In the domestic equity market, the 30-share BSE Sensex rose 131.18 points, or 0.17 per cent,

to close at 77,341.08 points. The broader NSE Nifty settled 36.75 points, or 0.16 per cent, higher at 23,537.85 points.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital markets on Friday, as they offloaded shares worth Rs 1,790.19 crore, according to exchange data.

Meanwhile, India's forex reserves dropped by USD 2.922 billion to USD 652.895 billion for the week ended June 14, the Reserve Bank said on Friday. In the previous reporting week, the kitty had jumped by USD 4.307 billion to USD 655.817 billion, a new all-time high after consecutive weeks of increase in the reserves.