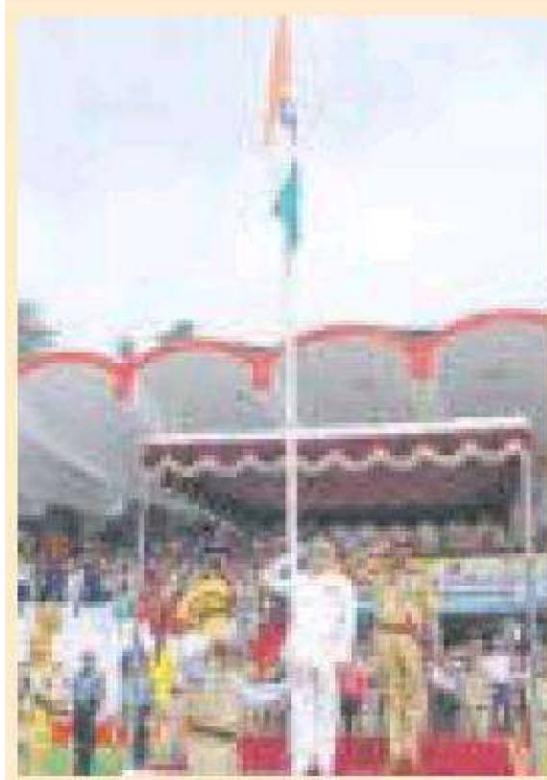


- Oil and Natural Gas Corporation celebrated its 63rd Anniversary across all regions and work centers in the country. At the corporate headquarters in Dehradun, ONGC Foundation Day was organised at a grand scale.



- Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) celebrated the 72nd Independence Day at all its work locations across India with patriotic zeal. Addressing the employees from Corporate Headquarters at Dehradun, ONGC CMD Shashi Shanker urged all ONGC employees to focus efforts for achieving energy independence for the country.

**Sudan wants OVL to
withdraw oil dues case**

NEW DELHI

Sudan has asked ONGC Videsh Ltd. (OVL) to withdraw its case against the African nation in an international arbitration court for recovery of over \$400 million in unpaid oil dues, saying it is making efforts to mitigate the default. OVL, however, wants to continue with the arbitration while the two sides work out a suitable mechanism to resolve the issue, the company said in a statement here.

Crisis management panel reviews Kerala operations

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 18 AUGUST

As Kerala fights its worst-ever floods, the National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC) met for the third consecutive day on Saturday to review rescue and relief operations being carried out to save lives and property in the state.

The meeting held under the chairmanship of Cabinet Secretary P K Sinha, in a video conference with the Kerala Chief Secretary, discussed the current flood situation and deployment of rescue teams, motorboats, helicopters, life jackets; provision of food, water and medicines; and restoration of power, telecom and transport links wherever they were disrupted, the Home Ministry said. In war-like efforts, 67 helicopters, 24 aircraft, 548 motorboats and thousands of rescue personnel from Indian Navy,

Army, Air Force, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), Coast Guard, other CAPFs, have been pressed into service to rescue and evacuate people from submerged areas to relief camps and for distribution of relief materials.

More than 6,900 life jackets, 3,000 life buoys, 167 inflatable tower lights, 2,100 raincoats, 1,300 gumboots and 153 chain saws have been provided as per the request of the state government. The Cabinet Secretary directed five more helicopters to be mobilised by IAF, Navy and ONGC which will be pressed into service by Sunday.

Additional motorboats have also been put on standby for deployment. So far, various Central Ministries have made available food, water and medicines which include 3,00,000 food packets, 6,00,000 MT of milk, 14,00,000 litres of drinking water, 150 potable water purification kits with capacity of 1,00,000 litres each. Railways said trains have been running to Thiruvananthapuram via Erode and Madurai.

It offered to run a special food and medicine train from Thiruvananthapuram to Ernakulam as per the requirements of the state government to distribute food and medicines to all the stations on the way.

At the review meeting, it was decided to make the Naval airstrip at Kochi functional for commercial flights by 20 August. The meeting also reviewed various measures to restore power lines, petrol pumps, LPG, health facilities, and to provide necessary medicines, food and fodder, etc., with full support from the concerned Central Ministries. With a view to improve telephone connectivity, the Department of Telecom has enabled intra-circle roaming which will enable subscribers of one service provider to access mobile towers of other service providers. All the operators have offered free data and SMS facility from Friday. Mobile towers called 'Cellular on Wheels' are also being deployed to ensure that no block remains unconnected.

The Ministry of Health has ready emergency medicines

and medical teams for deployment as soon as flood waters recede. The Cabinet Secretary directed that there should be proper coordination and distribution of the relief materials which are being offered by various state governments and other agencies. The state chief secretary while appreciating timely Central assistance, said there is some respite from the rainfall and water levels in the dam reservoirs are stabilising. As per IMD forecast, rainfall is expected to recede further barring in one or two districts.

The meeting was attended by Secretaries of Central Ministries including Home, Health, Civil Aviation, Food Processing, Telecom, Water Resources and senior officers of Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, NDRF, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Chairman, Central Water Commission (CWC) and other senior officers. Kerala participated over video conference represented by the Chief Secretary and his team. The NCMC will meet again on Sunday to review the situation.

Modi needs Atal resolve to bite PSU privatisation bullet

MANISH ANAND @ New Delhi

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi is seemingly yet to replicate the bold decision taken by his 'guru', the late Atal Bihari Vajpayee, to privatise loss-making public sector units (PSUs).

Unlike Vajpayee, who didn't flinch despite strident opposition from within the saffron camp against privatisation, Modi is yet to take proposals for strategic disinvestment to logical conclusions.

Modi has more than once stated that Vajpayee was his idol in administration. The late leader left a signature stamp on economic administration by going the whole hog and handing over a number of PSUs to private companies.

Vajpayee constituted a separate Ministry of Disinvestment headed by Arun Shourie and despite pressure from the RSS and its various wings, he went ahead with privatisation. Later, the UPA Government led by Manmohan Singh consigned the disinvestment agenda to a mere department and instructed it not to touch any of the PSUs.

Under the Modi Government, the disinvestment department under the Ministry of Finance continues in its dormant role despite the NITI Aayog pushing for revival of the Vajpayee-era privatisation push to boost the economy.

"From 2016 onwards, the NITI Aayog has submitted a list of 40 loss-making PSUs for strategic disinvestment, including selling to private firms. The proposal included Air India, which got the Cabinet nod as well. But there ap-

Privatisation in Vajpayee's time

Some of the PSUs privatised by the Vajpayee Government:

Bharat Aluminium Co. Ltd

Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd

Hindustan Zinc Ltd

HTL Ltd

Maruti Udyog

Modern Food Industries

CMC Ltd

17 ITDC hotels

pears to be no decisive will, which had been seen in Vajpayee's tenure, to take the agenda forward," said a senior NITI Aayog official.

However, the Modi Government has diluted equity of several PSUs, including oil firms, to shore up revenue.

While privatisation defined Vajpayee's clearly thought out economic reforms with signals to private firms that the government had confidence in them, Modi's tenure is marked with implementation of ideas conceptualised previously.

"The Modi Government has largely put in place a legislative framework for recovery of bad debt and combating black money and corporate corruption. His major economic achievements are demonetisation and GST rollout. The economic significance of demonetisation is not yet certain ...while GST had been in the making since Vajpayee's time," said the Aayog official.

यू.एस.-चीन ट्रेड वॉर की वजह से भारत जारी रख सकता है ईरान से तेल आयात

नई दिल्ली, 18 अगस्त (एजेंसी): अमरीका और चीन के बीच चल रही ट्रेड वॉर की वजह से भारत को ईरान से तेल खरीदने की छूट मिल सकती है। हो सकता है कि 4 नवम्बर से यू.एस. के प्रतिबंध लागू होने के बाद भी भारत ईरान से कच्चा तेल आयात करता रहे। दरअसल चीन के ऑयल इंपोर्टर यूनिके ने यू.एस. शिपमेंट को रोक दिया है।

कहा जा रहा है कि चीन अमरीका के कच्चे तेल पर भी आयात शुल्क लगाने की तैयारी कर रहा है। हालांकि चीन ने पिछले सप्ताह शुल्क की जो लिस्ट जारी की है उसमें कच्चा तेल शामिल नहीं था। जानकारों का कहना है कि ऐसा इसलिए किया गया क्योंकि कुछ शिप रास्ते में थे और रिफाइनर्स के साथ उनका सौदा पहले से हो चुका था। दूसरे कयास यह भी लगाए जा रहे हैं कि चीन अमरीका से सौदेबाजी करके सस्ती कीमतों में तेल खरीदना चाहता है।



स्थितियां भारत के लिए फायदेमंद

उद्योग से जुड़े लोगों का कहना है कि दोनों ही स्थितियां भारत के लिए फायदेमंद हैं। चीन एशिया में सबसे बड़ा तेल आयातक है और ईरान का भी बड़ा ग्राहक है। भारत ईरान से तेल खरीदने वाला दूसरा सबसे बड़ा आयातक देश है। रिफाइनिंग कम्पनियों के अधिकारियों के मुताबिक अगर चीन यू.एस. से तेल नहीं खरीदता है तो उसका बड़ा आयातक भारत बचेगा। ऐसे में भारत 5-6 प्रतिशत आयात बढ़ा सकता है। ऐसे में भारत के पास अमरीका से अपनी शर्त मनवाने का मौका होगा और प्रतिबंधों को लेकर भी अपनी बात मनवाई जा सकती है।

चीन भी ईरान से तेल खरीदना रख सकता है जारी

उन्होंने कहा कि अमरीका के खिलाफ इसी सौदेबाजी का उपयोग करके चीन भी ईरान से तेल खरीदना जारी रख सकता है। इसका मतलब जब तक बाजार में ईरान का तेल रहेगा, कीमतें भी सीमित रहेंगी। इससे प्रतिबंधों का असर भी कम हो जाएगा। 2010 से 2011 तक सऊदी अरब के बाद ईरान भारत का सबसे बड़ा तेल सप्लायर था लेकिन अमरीका द्वारा लगाए गए प्रतिबंधों के बाद यह 7वें स्थान पर चला गया था।