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Container Freight rates continue to Zoom

Aditya Sabharwal

There seems to be no respite for exporters as container shortage persists thereby causing container

country's ports.

'Shipping lines repositioned a record 1.85 million empty containers in the country in 2021 as demand

Jeevan Vikas, speaking to Vizag Industrial Scan.

The shortage of empty containers has led to a significant disruption in the supply chain across ports.

And this problem seems to be playing a bigger havoc for exporters in Vizag in particular as the city of destiny has traditionally been an export surplus port.

'Vizag alone witnessed an inflow of close to a lakh of empty containers brought in by shipping lines in 2021' informed Mr Jeevan.

With imports being low, exporters from this region have had to shell out mani-

Contd. on Page ..11



freights rates to zoom.

As demand for exports keeps cascading there has been an alarming dearth of empty containers not only in the city but across the

for exports surged and exporters continued to be hurt by an acute shortage of containers. The shortage is still continuing' said VCLA's president, Mr V

Singaporean Co. starts Air Separation Unit in Sri City

First Co to set up under GoAP's Medical Oxygen Mfg Policy

VIS News Service

AP's Chief Minister Mr. Y.S. Jaganmohan Reddy recently inaugurated the air separation plant of NovaAir Technologies Private Limited ("NovaAir") in Sri City Tadepalli.

A subsidiary of Novo



Holding, Singapore, NovaAir is said to be the very first major integrated industrial gas company that

Contd. on Page ..4

Exports of Electronic goods surge 49%

VIS News Service

TOP EXPORT DESTINATIONS: USA, UAE, CHINA

India's exports of Electronic Goods touched USD 1.67 Billion last month, registering a growth of 33.99% over \$1.25 Billion logged in December 2020.

Similarly for the period April-December 2021, the Sector Exports registered a

growth of 49% to USD 11.0 Billion (Provisional) over USD 7.4 Billion during same period in the year 2020. This is of much significance as the overall exports of Electronics Goods in the last Financial Year

Contd. on Page ..3



Made in India!

World leader in mineral-based specialty solutions for industry, Imerys, a French company, has opened its newest state of art plant at Vizag. SECAR® 68V is now available for the Indian refractory market.

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IN BRIEF

Minister dedicates BHEL-built CtM pilot plant

As part of the ongoing Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations, Union Minister for Heavy Industries, **Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey** dedicated India's first, BHEL-built Coal to Methanol (CTM) pilot plant, to the Nation in Hyderabad recently. Dr. Pandey also inaugurated an exhibition on 'Products Developed under Aatmanirbhar Bharat' organised at BHEL's Hyderabad unit. In addition, an audio-visual presentation was made on the 'Unsung Heroes of the Indian Freedom Struggle' belonging to the Telangana Region.



RINL-VSP bags awards at NCQC 2021

Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited- Visakhapatnam Steel Plant (RINL-VSP) won **15** "Par-Excellence" awards, **four** "Excellent" awards and **one** "distinguish" award at the National Convention on Quality Concepts (NCQC-2021), organized by "Quality Circle Forum of India (QCFI)", in hybrid mode at Coimbatore from Dec. 27th - Dec. 30th, 2021. Thirteen LQC teams and 7 "5S" teams from RINL participated. Among all the 'Par-Excellence' award winner LQC teams from RINL, the top three teams in the order of merit are "Proxy Tech" from Blast Furnace, "Atmanirbhar" from Special Bar Mill and "Alpha" from Light and Medium Merchant Mill. RINL CMD **Mr. Atul Bhatt**, congratulated all the winners for bringing laurels to the company.

Joshi Launches New R&R Policy of NLC India Ltd

Union Minister of Coal, Mines and Parliamentary Affairs **Mr. Pralhad Joshi** said that Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC) India Ltd, has been playing a pivotal role in ensuring India's energy security during the last six decades of performance. The Minister was virtually launching the new rehabilitation & resettlement (R&R) policy applicable to land owners of NLCIL mines area. Lauding the efforts of NLCIL and Tamil Nadu Government in framing a very flexible rehabilitation policy with multiple options available to the affected people, Mr. Joshi ensured that compensation to the affected villagers will be based on fair and transparent process.



NTPC invites Bids for Solar PV park in Cuba

VIS News Service

India's largest integrated energy producer, NTPC Ltd, has invited bids from developers to build a Solar PV park in Republic of Cuba.

As per an official release NTPC, a corporate partner of ISA International Solar Alliance (ISA) has been chosen as the preferred partner for implementation of 900 MW solar PV parks by Government of Cuba.

NTPC and Union Electrica de Cuba (UNE) would work in unison for the implementation of 900 MW solar PV parks in Cuba.



The government of Cuba, through its Ministry of Energy and Mines (MINEM), has taken support of ISA for implementation of 900 MW solar PV parks spread in 175 locations across all 15 provinces of Cuba.

NTPC, under ISA Program-6, shall be supporting UNE and MINEM in this selection process, signing of project agreements and overseeing project implementation till commissioning.

The Request for Qualification (RFQ) tender process will start from March 2022 till May 2022.

Coal Secy. launches Koyla Darpan Portal

VIS News Service

Dr. Anil Kumar Jain, Secretary, Ministry of Coal recently launched a portal "Koyla Darpan". The portal was launched to share Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) related to the Coal Sector.

As per the ministry the portal has the following KPIs - Coal/Lignite Production, Coal/Lignite Offtake, Exploration Data Central Sector Schemes, Status of Coal Stock in Thermal Power Plants, Infrastructure Projects, Allocation of Blocks (CMSP/MMDR), Monitoring of Major Coal Mines(CIL), Coal Price.

NALCO operationalizes 100% Pots at Angul plant

VIS News Service

National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO) achieved yet another milestone in aluminium smelting. As per an official release from the Company it has successfully put into operation all the 960 Pots at its existing Smelter Plant located at Angul Odisha.

NALCO CMD **Mr. Sridhar Patra**, formally operationalized the 960th Pot by virtually switching on the pot from NALCO Corporate Office. In course of its journey of last 41 years, the company finally achieved



which has helped NALCO to move from strength to strength and wished further

operation of 100% of Pots in Aluminium Smelter Plant for the first time said the release.

Calling it a breakthrough moment, CMD congratulated Team NALCO for making untiring efforts in difficult times to make this dream come true. He complimented all stakeholders for their support

success to the company with 100% operationalization of all potlines.

NALCO Smelter Plant at Angul, Odisha, is known for its environment friendly operations and for high purity Aluminium production. Recently, the company has received Excellent MOU Rating for 2020-21 by Ministry of Mines, Govt of India.

Team RINL has brought about a remarkable turnaround

VIS News Service

Celebrating the 73rd Republic Day with patriotic fervour in Ukkunagaram, RINL's C&MD **Mr Atul Bhatt** congratulated the RINL collective for having worked together to achieve record production in all major production units and for also having achieved a Profit After Tax of Rs.790 Crores during the first nine months of the fiscal. "The year 2021 has provided us many learning

He further informed that Hot Metal production stood at 4.428Mt registering a



growth of 47% while Liquid Steel production and Saleable Steel production stood at 4.196 Mt and at 3.885 Mt registering a

another feather in the cap. RINL took a step forward in aiding the Atma Nirbhar Bharat policy of the Govt. of India" the C&MD added.

RINL's top management including **Mr. V.V.Venu Gopal Rao**, Director (Finance), **Mr KK Ghosh**, Director (Projects), **Mr DK Mohanty**, Director (Commercial) & Director (Personnel), (Addl. charge), **Mr AK Saxena**, Director (Operations), **Mr. KVN Reddy**, CVO, **Mr**

"The commissioning of the Forged Wheel Plant was another feather in the cap. RINL took a step forward in aiding the Atma Nirbhar Bharat policy."

experiences and the company has benefitted enormously emerging stronger to face such challenges in future. We have to continuously look for opportunities in every process to cost savings" said Mr Bhatt.

growth of 47% and 44% respectively. Sales volume of 3.725 Mt registered a growth of 22% while Sales Turnover Rs.19403 registered a growth of 70%.

"The commissioning of the Forged Wheel Plant was

SK Patil, Dy.Commandant, CISE, CGMs, GMS, Senior Officers, representatives of SEA, Unions, SC&ST Association, Visteel Mahila Samiti, WIPS and employees participated in the celebrations.

Mineral Prod. up by 5% in Nov'21

VIS News Service

As per the data of Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM), Ministry of Mines, the index of mineral production of mining and quarrying sector for the month of **November, 2021** (Base: 2011-12=100) at 111.9, was 5.0% higher as compared to the level in the month of **November, 2020**.

The cumulative growth for the period **April- November, 2021-22** over the corresponding period of previous year has increased 18.2 percent stated an of-

ficial release.

Production level of important minerals in **November, 2021** stood as follows: Coal 679 lakh tonnes, Lignite 33 lakh tonnes, Natural gas (utilized) 2798 million cu. m., Petroleum (crude) 24 lakh tonnes, Bauxite 1710 thousand tonnes, Chromite 259 thousand tonnes, Copper conc. 10 thousand tonnes,

→ Gold Up 37.8%
→ Magnesite Up 28.1%
→ Natural Gas (U) Up 23.6%
→ Chromite Up 21.9%
→ Lignite Up 14.7%
→ Coal Up 8.5%

Gold 113 kg, Iron ore 194 lakh tonnes, Lead conc. 30 thousand tonnes, Manganese ore 224 thousand tonnes, Zinc conc. 132 thousand tonnes, Limestone 303 lakh tonnes, Phosphorite 122 thousand tonnes, Magnesite 8 thousand tonnes and Diamond 15 carat.

The production of important minerals showing

positive growth during **Nov., 2021** over **Nov., 2020** include: Gold (37.8%), Magnesite (28.1%), Natural Gas (U) (23.6%) Chromite (21.9%), Lignite (14.7%), lead conc.(14.4%), Zinc conc (13.9%), and coal (8.5%).

The production of other important minerals showing negative growth is: Petroleum (Crude) (-2.2%), Iron Ore (-2.4%), Copper conc(-7.8%), limestone (-8.7%), bauxite (-9.5%), Phosphorite (-9.8%), and Manganese ore (-15.2%).

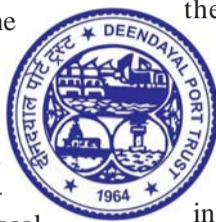
DPT Crosses 100 Million Mark

VIS News Service

Despite the constraints caused due to the ongoing Covid pandemic Deendayal Port Trust, has managed to cross the 100 MMT milestone, and in the process has become the 1st Govt. Sector Major Port, to cross the mark in the year 2021-22.

Incidentally, in the current fiscal year, DPT has crossed the milestone 4 weeks ahead in comparison of the last fiscal, i.e. FY 2020-21 during which DPT had reached the landmark on February 9, 2021.

As per DPT increase was seen in the Import cargoes such as POL, Edible Oils, Liquid Fertilizer Raw Materials like Phosphoric Acid and Ammonia, Chemicals, Rock Phosphate, Steel pipes, Iron ore, Coal, Timber logs and Crude Oil. Export cargoes such as Edible oil, Chemicals,



Food grains like Wheat and Soya Bean Mill, Bentonite and POL products at Vadinar have also witnessed growth in cargo throughput during FY 2021-22 as compared to FY 2020-21.

The DPT's cargo throughput growth in the 3rd quarter of current fiscal was the highest among all Govt. Major Ports, with the Port registering 33.52 MMT traffic in the Oct-Dec 21 quarter. In the month of December 2021 only, DPT had handled 11.32 MMT cargo which had contributed to about 18% of the total cargo handled by all Major Ports.

The Port's cargo handling is expected to cross 127 MMT by end of the current fiscal.

Exports of Electronic goods surge 49%

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(March, 2020-April, 2021) was USD 11.11 Billion, and with USD 11.0 Billion exports achieved in the first three Quarters of FY2021-22, the sector is set to break all-time record highs, far exceeding the previous high of \$11.7 Bn recorded in FY2019-20.

The top 5 export destinations in April-November 2021 were U S A (18%), UAE (16.6%), China (7.6%),

Netherlands (4.5%) & Germany (4.2%).

Mobile Phones constitute a major chunk of India's Electronics Goods sector exports. The sector includes IT Hardware (laptops, tablets), Consumer electronics (TV and audio), Industrial electronics, Auto electronics, Electronic components, LED Lighting, Strategic electronics, etc.

VOC Port handles longest Windmill blades

VIS News Service

V.O. Chidambaranar Port witnessed yet another landmark by handling wind blades of length 81.50 metres, the longest of its kind handled through VOC Port.

As per the port the loading of the 81.50 metre long wind blades (each weighing 25 Tonnes) was carried out diligently using Ship's Hydraulic cranes with utmost care to the safety of the cargo and cargo handling workers.

M/s. Nordex Manufacturing India Pvt. Ltd, the Shippers, expressed their appreciation towards VOC Port's capability & efficiency in handling such over dimensional Cargo. The Wind mill blades and towers were safely trans-

ported using specialized retractable wind blade and tower transportation trucks all the way from Vengal (Near Red hills, Chennai) to Tuticorin.

The Vessel 'M.V. MYS Dezhneva', with overall



Length (LOA) of 142.8 metres, was berthed at the Port on January 18, 2022 and loaded with 6 numbers of 81.50 Metre long wind blades and 12 numbers of 77.10 Metre long wind blades. On completion of loading, the Vessel sailed from VOC Port for the Port of Rostock, Germany,

JNPT records highest ever traffic in CY 2021

Handles 76.14 million tonnes & 5.63 million TEUs

VIS News Service

India's premier container port, Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT), continued its steady surge in cargo handling in CY 2021 with total container traffic of 5.63 million TEUs (5,631,949 TEUs) as against 4.47 million TEUs (4,474,878 TEUs) in CY 2020. This marks a growth of 25.86% over last calendar year. As per JNPT the total traffic of 76.14 million tonnes and container traffic of 5.63 million TEUs is the highest ever traffic handled in a year since the inception of the port.

It is also the highest exim container traffic handled by any Port in India. NSIGT handled 1.17 Million TEUs



(1,166,019) and BMCT handled 1.17 Million TEUs (1,170,502) during calendar year 2021, crossing 1 million TEU mark in a year

for the first time. The container traffic handled at JNPT during the April to December 2021 of the FY 2021-22 was 4,177,211 TEUs, which is 29.64% higher as against 3,222,093 TEUs of the container traffic in the same period of last year.

Congratulating the employees and stakeholders for their support in port performance, while celebrating India's

73rd Republic Day, **Mr Sanjay Sethi, IAS, Chairman, JNPT, said,** "JNPT's splendid performance in the calendar year inspite of the challenges of the pandemic is a testament to our commitment to fostering economic growth in India. Congratulations to all our employees and stakeholders and to our two terminals- NSIGT and BMCT, who have crossed 1 million TEUs mark in a year for the first time. As the world recovers from the pandemic and to meet the rising demand, the port has set out with the objective of being an end-to-end port operator for our stakeholders, ensuring timely and safe movement of their cargo by helping them optimize their logistical cost."

Qatar cargo Hyd does a 1st



VIS News Service

As per Qatar Cargo a staggering 11 Active e - container units were loaded onto our QR8651 freighter earlier this month. This is the highest ever uplift of these containers on board a Qatar Airways flight from HYD.

APEDA to boost honey Exports

Currently 80% of exports go to US

VIS News Service

In order to harness export potential of honey in line with the Prime Minister's vision of a 'Sweet Revolution' through promotion of beekeeping and allied activities, the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) has been giving thrust on boosting exports through ensuring quality production and

European Union and South East Asia," **Dr M Angamuthu, Chairman, APEDA** said. India is also renegotiating the duty structure imposed by various countries for boosting honey exports. As per APEDA India exported 59,999 metric tonnes (MT) of natural honey worth Rs. 716 crore (US \$ 96.77 million) during 2020-21, with the United States taking a major share at 44,881 MT. Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Bangladesh and Canada

NSWS portal gives its 1st approval

The first approval through the NSWS portal was granted on 11 January 2022 to M/s CMR-Kataria Recycling Private Limited for the Vehicle Scrapage Facility RVSF, Kheda, Gujarat with a capacity of 67,000 vehicles. As per GoI the approval has been made possible within a timeline of 63 days since RVSF application was submitted online on 08 November 2021.

The digital platform of NSWS facilitates investors to identify and apply for approvals. It supports information across 32 Central Ministries/ Departments and the platform has 14 States onboard.



Around 50% of the honey produced in India is consumed domestically and the rest is exported

M Angamuthu
APEDA, Chairman

market expansion to newer countries.

At present, India's natural honey exports are majorly dependent on one market - the United States, which accounts for more than 80 per cent of the exports.

"We are working in close collaboration with the state government, farmers and other stakeholders in the value chain to boost exports to other countries and regions such as the United Kingdom,

were the other top destinations for Indian honey. India started its first organized exports in the year 1996-97. World honey exported in 2020 is 736,266.02 MT. India ranks 8th and 9th in the world in honey producing and exporting countries respectively. The Government of India approved allocation of Rs 500 crore for the National Beekeeping and Honey Mission (NBHM) for three years (2020-21 to 2022-23).

AEPCs new Chairman



VIS News Service

Mr. Narendra Kumar Goenka, founder and Managing Director of Texport Industries Pvt Ltd, recently took charge of Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC) as its new Chairman.

Assuming charge of the Council at its Executive Committee meeting, **Mr Goenka** said, We are witnessing a robust growth in apparel exports. "Apparel exports were 22% up at \$1.46 billion in December 2021 from \$1.20 billion in Dec. 2020. The same in the first nine months of this fiscal stood at \$11.13 billion, 35% more than \$ 8.22 billion in April-Dec. 2020.

HSL Signs Rs. 66 Cr. Order

VIS News Service

Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL) recently signed an order worth Rs 66 Crs with M/s L&T Hydrocarbon Engg

pursuance of the performance of this Contract, an agreement is signed between M/s HSL and M/s LTHE.

Under this agreement,



Ltd for optimum utilization of its spare infrastructure and capacity.

As per HSL M/s L&T Hydrocarbon Engineering (LTHE) has been awarded a contract for fabrication works of Technological modules for M/s HPCL. In

HSL shall facilitate fabrication and assembly of technological modules for M/s LTHE through its sub-contractor M/s Pentaglobal Engineering and Construction Pvt. Ltd at HSL's Yard / premises.

New Supdt. Mumbai Dockyard



Rear Admiral KP Arvindan, VSM recently took charge as Admiral Superintendent of Naval Dockyard, Mumbai. Rear Admiral KP Arvindan, an alumnus of Naval College of Engineering, INS Shivaji, Lonavla, is from the first batch of the Naval Engineering Course and was commissioned into the Indian Navy in November 1987.

Vice President emphasises on ensuring Energy Security

VIS News Service

Addressing the First Convocation ceremony of the Indian Institute of Petroleum and Energy (IPE) in Visakhapatnam recently the Vice President, Mr M. Venkaiah Naidu called for increasing indigenous production of crude oil through strong R&D efforts to ensure energy security of the country.

Noting that India today is the third-largest consumer of crude oil in the world and that petroleum comprises an important component of India's energy mix, he said that the country is still heavily import-dependent for more than 80% of its oil needs.

'It is indeed important to focus on increasing

Says institutes like IPE have a central role to play

indigenous crude oil production and reducing imports to not only save precious foreign exchange but also to ensure energy security' said the VP.

Calling for 'Atma Nirbharta' in the country's energy mix, he said that institutes like IPE have a central role to play and



- India today is the third-largest consumer of crude oil in the world
- Import-dependent for more than 80% of its oil needs.
- India's primary energy demand is expected to grow at an average rate of more than 3% till 2045

informed that IPE was duly recognized as an Institution of National Importance in 2017. He therefore urged IPE to take the lead in two aspects: One, in bridging the supply gap of skilled manpower for the Petroleum Sector and two, to aim for excellence in research of petroleum and its by-products.

'Overall, there is a need to invest in research institutes in a big way and create the ecosystem for innovation to thrive and help the country to become 'energy secure' in the coming years' said Mr Naidu.

He further opined that for excellence in the hydrocarbons' research, it is important to promote

Need For:

- Sponsored research, collaboration and consulting with industries
- For Universities to take up research work and projects which have a component of renewable energy research

'industry-institute' linkages to boost R&D outcomes.

'Sponsored research, collaboration and consulting with industries are integral to today's R&D landscape and institutes in this area should

explore opportunities with all prominent private players' said the VP.

He appreciated IPE for collaborating with oil majors in the country such as HPCL, IOCL and even entering into MoUs with foreign universities to pursue joint research.

Observing that India is blessed with ample renewable sources such as solar, wind and tidal power, the Vice President suggested fully tapping the potential of these sources of energy as part of the efforts to reduce the use of fossil fuels.

Universities must also take up research work and projects which have a component of renewable energy research. While IPE is presently offering

Petroleum Engineering and Chemical Engineering at UG levels and Ph.D., I am happy to note that the institute is planning to promote research in alternative energy sources.

NovaAir's Rs 130 cr Air separation plant in Sri City

Contd. from Page 1

Medical Oxygen Manufacturing Policy.

Inaugurating the plant the CM congratulated NovaAir for commissioning the large scale oxygen plant in a short span of 14 months. 'I am also glad to note that it provides employment opportunity for over 150 people' said the CM.

Welcoming the Chief Minister and other senior officials, Mr. Gajanan Nabar, MD & CEO, NovaAir thanked the Chief Minister for inaugurating the plant and said, 'This is a testament to the success of the single window clearance mechanism of the Andhra Pradesh Government when we look at the quick timeframe for the necessary approvals and clearances to NovaAir. The complete turnaround time to operations too has been equally phenomenal. This, despite the fact that

the Covid-19 pandemic was raging across the state at the time, clearly demonstrates the synergies between the departments'. He also lauded the District authorities, APIIC, Industries Department and Sri City management for having played a critical role



This is a testament to the success of the single window clearance mechanism of the AP Government. Within a quick timeframe we got all the necessary approvals and clearances.

Mr Gajanan Nabar
NovaAir MD&CEO

in ensuring that this record timeline of NovaAir has fructified

Commenting on the occasion Mr. Ravindra Sannareddy said, 'I congratulate Mr. Gajanan Nabar and the entire NovaAir team for commissioning the plant in a record time. And to strengthen the state government's plans for rapidly augmenting the

oxygen production in the state, the company has set up the plant on a war-footing.'

This is said to be the first project of NovaAir in India wherein it will produce significant quantity of medical oxygen which will

certainly help the region to tied over the covid wave.

Further it would provide all required industrial gases to industries located in Sri City and neighbouring regions. NovaAir, an integrated industrial gas company with interests in atmospheric gases (oxygen, nitrogen, argon) has set up the plant at an investment of Rs. 130 Cr. The plant has a capacity to produce 250 tons of these gases per day.

PF adalat on Feb. 10

VIS News Service

The next Nidhi Aapke Nikat or PF Near You will be held on February 10 at Regional Office Murrupalem in Visakhapatnam.

Accordingly, all employees Provident fund subscribers as well as employees (both exempted and un-exempted establishments) and other stakeholders of Visakhapatnam district having any grievances/issues are hereby requested to prefer the same before the Regional PF Commissioner, Visakhapatnam on or before February 5. The grievances/issues pertaining to Srikakulam and Vizianagaram may be preferred at respective district offices on or before February 5.

Prez. medal for Vizag Customs Official

VIS News Service

Dr K V Mohan Rao, Additional Assistant Director, working in the National Academy of Customs, Indirect Taxes & Narcotics (NACIN), Zonal Campus, Visakhapatnam, has been conferred with "Presidential Award for Specially Distinguished Record of Service" on the eve of Republic Day 2022. The Government of India issued a Gazette on 25.01.2022 stating that the President of India is pleased to award this.

Dr K V Mohan Rao is a master trainer in Goods Services Tax and delivered several hundreds of lectures on GST. He took up classes of training to the officers from the Central GST, State GST and officers from the Union Territory of Lakshadweep and members of Trade Associations at various



places of Andhra Pradesh. Before the pandemic, he visited various places such as Vijayawada, Guntur, Rajahmundry, Kakinada, Vizianagaram etc in the State of Andhra Pradesh and conducted GST Trainings for State and Central Tax Officers.

Dr K V Mohan Rao has been actively contributing as a course coordinator for many Induction Training Courses for newly recruited Inspectors of Central GST, Examiners and Preventive Officers of Customs since 2017.

R-DAY BRIEFS

Rich tributes paid to tyagis at NSTL



Public Sector Units in Visakhapatnam celebrated the 73rd Republic Day in a grand manner. They recollected the supreme sacrifice made by the freedom fighters. At Naval Science & Technological Laboratory (NSTL), **Dr. Y Sreenivas Rao**, Director NSTL hoisted the national flag in the presence of Navy Officers, DSC Cadets, Scientists, Officers, other NSTL employees. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Sreenivas paid tributes to the soldiers and lakhs of freedom fighters who sacrificed their lives for the nation.

VPT to increase Cargo Handling in 2021-22

At Visakhapatnam Port Trust Chairman **Mr. A.K. Ramamohanarao, IAS**, unfurled the National Flag and took the Rastriya salami presented by the contingents of CISF at port Stadium. Speaking on the occasion he said relentless efforts of port employees during the pandemic resulted in uninterrupted supply of essential commodities throughout the country. Further he added that the VPT will put the same efforts, in future to increase the cargo handling during the financial year 2021-22.

ECoR achieves Rs. 6040 Cr. till Dec.

At Waltair Division of East Coast Railway DRM **Mr Anup Satpathy**, unfurled the National Flag and took the Rashtriya salami presented by the contingents of Railway Protection Force and Civil Defence on the occasion of 73rd R-Day. Speaking on the occasion DRM said Waltair Division, despite challenges, is showing good performance in this financial year 2021-22. Waltair Division stood in frontline in all the fields like safety, Security, infrastructure development, amenities improvement and innovative measures. The gross earnings achieved to Rs 6040 Crores in this financial year till December. The D.R.M announced cash awards to various Departments which have made arrangement for the successful conduction of the Republic day.



R-Day at IPE

At Indian Institute of Petroleum and Energy (IPE), Visakhapatnam **Prof. VSRK Prasad**, Director, IPE unfurled the tri-colour and addressed the gathering on this occasion. He emphasized that every citizen of India should strive on their part for building a better, corruption-free and self-reliant India.

'DCIL witnessing organisational restructuring'

At DCIL, MD and CEO **Dr Ag.Y.V Victor**, unfurled the National Flag. Addressing the gathering Prof Dr Victor recollected the supreme sacrifice made by the freedom fighters and paid homage to the architects of the Constitution of India for having given the nation the supreme law of the land. Prof Dr Victor stressed on the fact that DCI is witnessing organisational and financial restructuring to infuse organizational discipline.



CM unveils Andhra Pradesh's 1st LEED Platinum hotel

ITC gives Guntur its First 5 star Hotel

VIS News Service

Marking many firsts in the hospitality space in the rich region of Guntur, ITC HOTELS recently opened Welcomhotel Guntur, *Andhra Pradesh's First LEED Platinum Hotel*.

Located in Vidyanagar on the Ring Road, about an hour away from the Vijayawada Airport and around 4 km away from the Guntur Railway Station, Welcomhotel Guntur as per ITC is the first five-star hotel in the region, and the first LEED Platinum Certified Hotel in **Andhra Pradesh**.

The hotel has 104 well-appointed guest rooms, including a Presidential Suite, 4 Executive Suites & 4 Standard Suites. The well-designed rooms range from 32 sq. mt. to 130 sq. mt in dimension.

ITC Welcomhotel Guntur has been awarded Platinum rating under LEED NC (New Construction) program in 2021. Platinum rating is the highest category of certification preceded by Gold and Silver Certified. This certification attests to Welcomhotel Guntur's commitment to sustainability with energy-efficient green buildings, utilization of renewable energy, conservation and recycling of water and concrete measures to preserve the ecosystem.



The Chief Minister **Mr. Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy** Lighting the Lamp to mark the Inauguration of ITC Welcom Hotel in Guntur along with ITC CMD **Mr. Sanjiv Puri**

The hotel is powered by renewable energy sourced from ITC's own wind energy farm near Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh. Welcomhotel Guntur also has its own water bottling plant that enables it to serve zero-

Speaking on the occasion **Mr. Nakul Anand**, Executive Director, ITC Ltd stated, "ITC Hotels takes great pride in launching 'Welcomhotel Guntur', the first LEED Platinum certified hotel in the state

Welcomhotel continues to surge forward adding a number of properties across India to its portfolio."

Drawing inspiration from its ecosystem, and the fertile environment, the hotel's brick colour exterior is a tribute to Guntur being the largest chilli market yard in Asia. A land of temples, and art, the tropical climate and beautiful botanical surroundings all find voice in Welcomhotel Guntur with its earthy, vibrant colours, airy interiors, lush vegetation, traditional art, and indigenous flavours.

The hotel is also well-equipped with a gymnasium a spa based on time-honoured Indian wellness principles and global wellness concepts, a state-of-the-art salon, and a rooftop pool area are designed to elevate guest experience.

Welcomhotel Guntur

- Powered by renewable energy sourced from ITC's own wind energy farm near Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh
- Has its own water bottling plant that enables it to serve zero-mile bespoke drinking water in glass bottles

mile bespoke drinking water in glass bottles christened 'Sunya Aqua'. A rich amalgamation of heritage, local aesthetics, contemporary veneers, and modern-day comforts along with ITC Hotels' renowned culinary offerings seamlessly find expression in Welcomhotel Guntur.

of Andhra Pradesh. Being the first five-star hotel in Guntur, Welcomhotel Guntur is reflective of the warmth of Indian hospitality, augmented by our internationally acclaimed standards of service. The new opening will strengthen our footprint in the southern region as Brand

Infra key pillar for India's Growth

VIS News Service

Union Minister, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, **Mr Nitin Gadkari** reiterated the importance of well-developed infrastructure for enhancing the level of economic activity and creating an inclusive ecosystem.

Addressing the Indian Institute of Management, Visakhapatnam's Vriddhi 3.0 conclave the minister spoke on how robust infrastructure can play an important role in fulfilling the vision of India in becoming a \$5 trillion economy.

He added that India is ready to adopt the world's

best technology without compromising quality, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability. He also emphasized the



importance of youngsters working at the grassroots level in developing cost-effective sustainable global solutions that will help in the development of rural and tribal areas.

The union minister advised the students to convert problems into opportunities with commercially viable

solutions and the need for application of knowledge and skillsets that MBA Graduates possess, in contributing to the planning, implementation and management of infrastructure projects.

Some of the topics the Minister touched upon included enabling common citizens to invest in infrastructure projects through new models for asset monetization under consideration of the Govt., the role of infrastructure development in giving boost to rural economy, thereby empowering the village and tribal populations who are at a disadvantage socially and economically and educationally.

Cabinet approves 11th PRC

VIS News Service

The decision to raise the retirement age of state government employees from 60 to 62 years and the implementation of the 11th Pay Revision Commission (PRC) has been approved by the state cabinet, according to state information, civil relations, transport and cinema tography department Minister **Mr. Venkatramayya (Nani)**. Explaining the decisions of the Cabinet meeting held at the Secretariat to the media the Minister said that the government was ready to discuss the issues of the employees, including PRC related to jobs.

NABARD sanctions Rs 1392.23 crs for bolstering Health Care Infra in AP

VIS News Service

NABARD has sanctioned a loan of Rs 1392.23 crore under its Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) for establishment of 3 New Medical Colleges-cum-Hospitals in YSR Kadapa, Vizianagaram and East Godavari Districts. In addition, these funds will also be used for establishment of 5 Multi-Speciality Hospitals in Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, East Godavari, West Godavari and Prakasam Districts. These infrastructure projects would improve the healthcare facilities in the State and also provide



We have been actively partnering with Government of Andhra Pradesh in improving Health & Education Infra.

Mr Sudhir Jannawar
CGM, NABARD

timely healthcare in remote tribal areas of the State. As per an official release from NABARD the Medical Colleges-cum-Hospitals will have facilities for major operation theatre, clinical OPDs, dialysis, burn ward, casualty ward, specialized clinical cum surgical ward, oxygen plant, etc. besides providing quality infrastructure for

improved medical education. The Multi-speciality hospitals will have consultation rooms, Aayush clinic, treatment procedure room, dialysis ward, diagnostic labs, OT complex, OPD, General/Pediatrics/orthopedic wards, etc. **Mr Sudhir Kumar Jannawar**, Chief General Manager, Andhra Pradesh

Regional Office, NABARD said, the bank has been actively partnering with Government in improving the health and education infrastructure in the State.

NABARD has so far sanctioned Rs. 3092 crore to school projects being implemented under the GoAP's flagship Nadu-Nedu programme. The support will enable creation of additional classrooms, providing toilets and drinking water facilities in 25648 schools. NABARD has also supported the State Government in establishment of Anganwadi Centres and Integrated Agri-Aqua labs, said Mr Sudhir Kumar.

Jagan calls for early construction of digital libraries

VIS News Service

The Chief Minister

YS Jaganmohan Reddy has directed the authorities to complete the construction of YSS digital libraries on a war footing. It was clarified that the first phase of digital libraries should be completed by June this year. He held a



high-level review meeting recently on the progress of construction work on the YSR digital libraries.

The government suggested to set up desktop tables, system chairs, fans, tube lights, iron racks along with desktop, UPS, internet connection in every digital library. Officials explained that the work of digital libraries is progressing fast. The CM directed to see to it that the structures of the remaining digital libraries in Phase-1 are covered in Phase-2. He said that digital libraries would be set up across the state and work should start

immediately where it has not yet started.

The Chief Minister directed the officials to install computers, internet connection and other infrastructure as soon as possible. He said, work-from-home can be made easier with the construction of digital libraries.

Officials explained that the net connectivity required for the digital libraries being set up in 4,530 villages in Phase-1 would be completed by February 2022. The review meeting was attended by Science and Technology and Power Minister.

Drive on Plastic Ban

VIS News Service

Despite ban on the use of single use plastic bags, there has been extensive use of the banned plastic in markets, and other places. In this connection, Waltair Division conducted awareness drives- on saying 'no' to plastic bags and encouraging use of cloth at the railway stations or in railway premises.

New office-bearers of ICSI

VIS News Service

The Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI) - Visakhapatnam Chapter recently elected its new office-bearers for the Vizag office.

Ms. Vaghira Kumari Jonnada has been elected as its Chairperson, **Mr. GS Giridharan** as its Vice-



Chairman, **Mr. Manoj Parakh** as its Secretary and **Mr. Manoj Rey** as its

Treasurer. The members have been elected for a period of one year. **Mr. AVVSSCHB Sekhar Babu**, Senior Practising Company Secretary and Fellow Member of ICSI, Chairman of SIRC of the ICSI will Continue as Ex Officio Member of the ICSI Visakhapatnam Chapter.

HSL's New Model Room

VIS News Service

On the occasion of the 73rd Republic Day **Mr Hemant Khatri**, Chairman and Managing Director, HSL inaugurated a Model Room and

the employees for their continuous efforts in transformation of the Yard which has enabled HSL to improve its delivery timelines. He stated that the shipyard has achieved a historical



Motivation Hall to foster an understanding of HSL's journey and contribution to the Shipbuilding Industry. As per HSL these facilities will motivate HSL personnel, the Apprentice Trainees and students to pursue their career in Shipping and Shipbuilding Industry. In his address, C& MD congratulated all

milestone by completing construction of 200 Ships and repairing 2000 Ships for various customers. He also highlighted that the Shipyard has dedicated its 200th Ship 'Balbir' to the nation by delivering the Vessel to Naval Dockyard, Mumbai on 24 Jan 2022 under Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav initiative.

Recent changes in GST law

Swetha Giridhar

With the dawn of the new year, a fresh set of GST changes have been announced which is effective from 01st January, 2022. The amendments which have been introduced span across a wide spectrum such as taxability, input credit restriction, enforcement provisions, persons liable to pay tax and rate changes. One of the significant amendments pertain to the insertion of Section 16(2)(aa) of the CGST Act, 2017 which has introduced a new condition for availment of input GST credit i.e., credit of input GST on an input side invoice or debit note can be availed only when details of such invoice/debit note have been furnished by the supplier in his outward supplies (i.e., GSTR-1). While this condition was earlier present in the rules and most of the taxpayers were following the same by way of reconciliation with



the GSTR-2A made available in the portal, this has now been incorporated in the Act putting all the speculations about the enforcement of such a condition through the rules to a rest. Thus, going forward all taxpayers can avail only such amount of ITC appearing in the GSTR-2B. With this amendment, the earlier relaxation provided through Rule 36(4) of CGST Rules, 2017 which provided that to the extent of 5% of mismatched invoices has also been removed. In view of this new change in the statute, companies should ensure that going forward ITC is being availed

only after monthly reconciliation with GSTR-2B. This becomes even more pertinent as revenue authorities may deny ITC if this condition is not fulfilled.

Another significant amendment which may prove costly for consumers is the taxation of passenger transportation service in auto rickshaws if the same is provided through an e-commerce platform. Similarly, the liability to pay tax on restaurant service has also now been fixed on the e-commerce operator which was earlier paid by the respective restaurants depending on their turnover. These amendments will make the services provided by small service providers whose services will not attract GST otherwise more expensive when provided through e-commerce platform as GST on the same would become applicable. These amendments may ultimately affect the consumers availing the service.

Consequent to this change, e-commerce operators will no longer be required to discharge TCS collected on restaurant service and the corresponding monthly compliance in Form GSTR-8 would no longer be required. However, for other services which are supplied through e-commerce operator the existing model of collecting and depositing TCS would continue, thereby, increasing the compliance burden on the e-commerce operator. The government has also aligned the HSN codes with the updated codes maintained by the World Customs Organisation with effect from 1st January, 2022. This has resulted in change of existing HSN codes and insertion of new HSN codes. The industry would have to ascertain if there is any change in the HSN codes for their products which is required to be disclosed in their import documentation as well as in the GST documentation.

(The Writer is Manager, BDO India LLP)

NSM for RADM Bhalla



Rear Admiral Sanjay Bhalla was recently awarded the Nao Sena Medal (devotion to Duty). RADM Bhalla is currently the Command of the Eastern Fleet, the Sword Arm of the Eastern Naval Command. He was commissioned into the Indian Navy on 01 Jan 1989 and is a specialist in Communication and Electronic Warfare. The Flag Officer is an alumnus of the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington; College of Naval Warfare, Mumbai and Royal College of Defence Studies, London. During his illustrious career spanning 33 years, he served onboard several capital ships as Signal Communication Officer.

CM reviews State's Ports & Airports Infra

VIS News Service

The Chief Minister **Mr. Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy** recently held a review meeting on the progress of construction work of new ports and airports in the state.

The officials informed him that at present six airports are being operated at Tirupati, Kadapa, Rajahmundry, Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada, Kurnool.

The CM ordered the officers that construction of airports should be carried out uniformly in all districts and focus should be laid on creating all the infrastructure needed for this. The runway should be developed so that Boeing planes can also land at the airports.

He asked the officials to focus on expansion and development of 6 existing airports in the state, as well as construction of two new airports i.e; Bhogapuram in Vizianaragam district and Dagadarti in Nellore district. The officials were told to pay special attention on expansion of Gannavaram airport.



CM review on seaports Officials briefed the CM on the progress of new ports and fishing harbours in the state.

The CM said that 9 fishing harbours and 3 ports in the state should be constructed with utmost priority.

Officials said that work on the Ramayapatnam port would begin soon

Fishingharbours Of the 9 fishing harbours, 4 are in the early stages of construction and are expected to be completed by October.

Initial construction of fishing harbours in Uppada (East Godavari), Nizampatnam (Guntur), Machilipatnam (Krishna)

and Juvvaladinne (Nellore) districts. Officials said that the construction of the remaining 5 harbours

will be finalized soon In Phase 2 Fishing Harbours would be constructed in Budagatla -

palem (Srikakulam), Pudidamakka (Visakhapatnam), Biyyaputhippa (West Godavari), Kottapatnam (Prakasam) Districts

The review meeting was attended by Industries, Commerce, IT and Skill Development Minister **Mekapati Gautam Reddy**, CS **Sameer Sharma**, Industries and Commerce Special CS **Karikala Valaven**, C F S S CEO **Ravisubhash**, AP Maritime Board CEO **K Muralitharan**, Advisors to Corporation.

Industry Minister takes stock of Projects

Industries Minister **Mr. Mekapati Gautam Reddy** recently conducted a review on the various departments he manages wherein a meeting was held on the 2022-23 Action Plan.

The Minister inquired about the progress of airports and port-wise development from the Special Principal Secretary, Ministry of Industries, **Mr. Karikal**

Valavan. The Minister also inquired about the progress of the Visakhapatnam-Chennai corridor.

They are scheduled to meet again on February 4. The Minister directed that an action plan be prepared and a report submitted within that day.

APIIC MD **Mr. Subramaniam** brought the details of Nellore District KRIS City to the attention of the Minister. He

informed to the Minister that the bidding process has already been completed.

He said that all the departments in the industry are operating different portals and the process of converting all the departments into a single website as a social media platform has been handed over to the concerned departmental officials.

CM launches MIGs housing projects

Chief Minister **Mr. Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy** recently launched the Jagananna Smart Townships for middle-income group (MIGs) in the state by making live the JST website.

He said that the government aims to ensure that every poor person has a home and the dream of owning a house for middle-class people will be fulfilled

through the Jagananna Smart Township scheme. Mr. Reddy launched residential plots for middle-class families under Jagananna Smart Townships besides the official website to book plots. The CM said all family members belonging to AP with income upto Rs 18 lakh PA are eligible to apply from three categories of plots.

Waltair Div. achieves 50MT freight loading

VIS News Service

Waltair division of the east coast railways in the current financial year i.e. April to 10th January 2021-22, has achieved freight loading of 50 Million Tons (MT) in just 285 days. As per the division it loaded more than 50.11 MT in the last 9 months and 10 days. This is 13.35% more than the previous year (2020-2021), during which time it

had loaded about 44.21MT.

This has been achieved in spite of acute shortage of wagons, prevalence of pandemic and major derailments in the critical Kottavalasa-Kirandul line territory. Divisional Railway Manger, Waltair Division, **Mr. Anup Satpathy** appreciated the team that indulged in this accomplishment for its relentless efforts.



DCI and UAE's NMDC ink MoU

For Strategic co-operation in Dredging, waterways & civil marine Infra.

VIS News Service

India's listed dredging company, Dredging Corporation of India (DCI) and UAE listed company National Maritime Dredging Company, (NMDC) recently entered into a strategic alliance. As per an official release from DCI it stated that this would go a long way in achieving the goals as envisaged in the Maritime Vision 2030. This would help DCI in collaboration with NMDC to cater the needs of the ports in more efficient way said the release.

Speaking on the occasion, **Prof. Dr. GYV Victor**, the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of DCI said, with increase marine infrastructure development activities more specifically in the Indian sub-continent, African region and middle, far east region, the Indian and Abu Dhabi based dredging premier and largest companies shall collaborate with mutual cooperation to form strategic alliance to participate and bid for projects on



We shall collaborate with mutual cooperation to form strategic alliance to participate and bid for projects on case to case basis in different regions.

Prof. Dr. GYV Victor
MD & CEO

case to case basis in these regions.

Prof. Dr GYV Victor, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of DCI and **Engr. Yasser Nassr Zaghoul**, Group Chief Executive Officer of NMDC chartered the memorandum of understanding to transform the respective companies as leaders in these regions.

The strategic alliance shall focus on areas that shall not be limited to capital dredging works, project development on BOT basis, Operate ports as managers, participate in the public, private partnership in dredging works in accordance to the Dredging Policy, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, port development, operations and manage-

ment, reclamation works and development of multimodal transportation. The projects execution shall be either through a joint venture or as a consortium on a project to project basis.

Speaking on the occasion **Engr. Yasser Nassr Zaghoul**, the Group Chief Executive Office of NMDC said, "This agreement is a statement of intent between the NMDC and DCI that we are keen to broaden our level of collaboration. Each partner brings to the table unique strengths and experience. The agreement complements the Group's robust plans to strengthen our capabilities and expertise and expand our operations across the region and South-East Asia."

NMDC (The Group) and DCI have also agreed on mutual participation and mutual bid submissions across the region on a project-to-project basis. They will also cooperate on projects which are subcontracted, through a consortium, or any other specific arrangements, by outlining their responsibilities that will be jointly agreed upon and delivered.

Both partners will provide each other with technical and other support, if required through a joint venture agreement, or any other contractual form, to enable either of them to pre-qualify for a tender process, as well as secure and execute projects during the tendering.

Both the companies signed the strategic alliance memorandum of understanding through virtual platform, **Capt S Divakar**, Chief General Manager of DCI and **Engr. Yasser Nassr Zaghoul**, the Group Chief Executive Office of NMDC are signatories to the document.

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VIS Startup Focus

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Meenakshi Bhatt

Robotics is one of the most interesting aspects of science. Many startups are coming out with interesting ways of automating processes earlier done by human intervention. One such startup which is making a mark in this space is Robocoupler. Headquartered in Visakhapatnam and founded way back in 2009 by **Praveen Malla**, the startup is into manufacturing that also provides training and initiates student development programmes. The startup also claims to be India's first Andro Humanoid Robots manufacturing company.

'Our main activity is providing Development in Small Scale Industries and Training in Real time Embedded and Robotics for Academics' informed Mr. Malla.

The startup works on Artificial Intelligence demonstrated by machines, Embedded systems and Mechatronics.

Robocoupler has come out with some unique and innovative robots such as CYBIRA which stands for Cyber Security Interactive Robot Agent, a Woman Virtual Reality Robotic Cop which helps the public in different areas with multiple applications.

Similarly it has a 3-FINGER ADAPTIVE ROBOT GRIPPER wherein the robot grasps something tightly. The fingers come in contact with the part that is to be grasped and the jaws move in synchronous motion.

Thirdly it has a robot MIRA (THE SERVING ROBOT) which assists humans performing jobs that are monotonous, redundant and even dangerous. These are autonomous and are operated by a built-in control system.

Apart from building robots the startup also provides training and has been imparting training in robotics for the last 4 years. It claims to have trained around 38,000 students and helped them get placed in MNCs.

In terms of revenue the startup makes money through 3 verticals i.e. Academics, Business to Government (B2G) and Business to Customers (B2B).

Some of the ongoing projects that the company is working on are the development of Animatronics and CV-BoT 2021.

Below is a brief snapshot of the company and founder:

Founders Name : Mr. Praveen Malla

Incubated/Started (Year) : 2009

Industry : Comprehensive Robotics Manufacturing

Number of Team Members : 12

Funding Received : BootStrapped

Vision : To develop low cost Andro Humanoid Robot

Market of Operation: Andhra Pradesh

Claim to Fame: Recognised by DPIIT

Company's culture :

Aggressive Easy Going Methodical

PTIM (Person that inspires me): Nicholas Tesla

National Startup Awards 2021 winners announced

VIS News Service

The Results of the National Startup Awards (NSA) 2021 were recently declared wherein a total of 46 Startups were recognized as winners along with 1 incubator and 1 accelerator.

The second edition invited applications across 15 sectors and 49 sub-sectors. The sectors included Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Drinking Water, Education & Skill Development, Energy, Enterprise Technology, Environment,

Fintech, Food Processing, Health & Wellness, Industry 4.0, Security,

languages and to compliment national

categories. These applicants included 863 Women-led, 414 innovations for combatting COVID-19 and 253 Startups working in rural areas.

The recognised entities will benefit from such recognition, not only in terms of being able to attract more business, financing, partnerships and talent, but also enable them to serve as role models for other entities, and to inspire them to be purposeful and responsible about their socio-economic impact.



Space and Transport and Travel. Six special categories were also introduced to recognize exceptional Startups contributing to the good of the society. The 2021 edition of the awards also recognized exceptional Startups innovating solutions to promote Indic

efforts to combat COVID-19 pandemic. A total of 2177 applications were received from Startups across the 49 sub-sectors along with applications from 53 incubators and 6 accelerators for the ecosystem enablers

Govt. launches Fisheries Startup Challenge

The Department of Fisheries, Govt. of India in association with Startup India, Ministry of Commerce and Industry inaugurated the "Fisheries Startup Grand Challenge" on 13th January 2022.

The challenge has been launched with an objective to provide a platform to start-ups within the country to showcase their innovative solutions within the Fisheries and Aquaculture sector. "Fisheries Startup Challenge" launched recently by Department of Fisheries, GoI will be live for 45 days for submission of applications on the Startup India portal - www.startupindia.gov.in. The following themes have been identified for submission of problem statements

under the Fisheries Start-up Grand Challenge.

The challenge is expected to foster start-up culture within the sector and to establish a strong foundation of the entrepreneurial model, the Department of Fisheries has earmarked funds to the tune of Rs. 3.44 Crore for the challenge. The selected 12 winners will be awarded a cash grant of Rs 2.00 Lakh each to 10 shortlisted start-ups for translating their 'Idea to PoC'. In the final round a grant up to INR 20.00 lakh (General category) and INR 30.00 Lakh (SC/ST/Women) will be provided to the winners for transforming their ideas into effective pilots which would further translate into commercialization.

AU Startup selected for Chaunati 2.0 Prog.



VIS News Service

Two students of Andhra University **Kapuganti Vikas** and **Ponnada Mahidhar** have been selected for National Chaunati 2.0 programme conducted by Software Technology Parks of India (STPI). Their edutech startup Edumoon has been selected at the national level. They will get fund-

ing from Nextgen Technology.

As per release from AU Mr. Vikas and Mr. Mahidhar participated in three rounds and got selected for the national level. AU Vice-Chancellor Prof. PVGD Prasada Reddy congratulated them. AU Incubation Centre CEO Mr. Ravi Eswarapu was also present on the occasion.

Focus on Startups in Tier 2 and 3 cities: Goyal to VCs

VIS News Service

Union Minister of Commerce & Industry, Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution and Textiles, **Mr Piyush Goyal** has called upon the Global Venture Capital (VC) Funds to focus more on Startups from Tier 2 and 3 cities.

Chairing the 4th Roundtable with Global Venture Capital Funds, organised by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Mr Goyal invited the VCs to explore new sectors for investing, promote and protect the intellectual property created by the young Indian entrepreneurs, provide expertise to scale-up and explore greater capital



infusion including risk capital. The Government has already taken a number of steps to support the Startups and would do so in the future also, he added.

It was pointed out in the meeting that India is home to over 61,000 recognised Startups spread across 55 industries, with 45% of them emerging from Tier 2 and 3 cities and 45% of Startups having at least one Woman Director, a testimony of diversity, spread and inclusivity of

the Indian Startup ecosystem. It was also highlighted that specifically for Startup ecosystem, 49 regulatory reforms have been undertaken by the Government to enhance Ease Of Doing Business, Ease Of Raising Capital and Reduce Compliance Burden.

The Roundtable was held through video conference as part of the Startup India Innovation Week. Over 75 VC fund investors from across the United States, Japan, Korea, Singapore, and some Global Funds domiciled in India participated in the deliberations. These funds have a total Assets Under Management (AUM) of more than USD 30 billion in the Indian Region. A number of suggestions were made by the Global VC funds, which they felt could further the investors' sentiment in the sector.

STPI to set up incubation centre in AU



Software Technology Parks of India has decided to set up an incubation Centre at Andhra University. STPI team led by Director and scientist Mr. G.C.V.D. Ram Prasad recently met Andhra University Vice-Chancellor Prof. P.V.G.D Prasada Reddy.

The State-of-the-art incubation centre will be set up in 25,000 sq ft. with an investment of Rs. 19.75 crores in the initial stage.

STPI which belongs to the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology handed over the letter to AU V-C. The V-C. said that MoU in this regard would be signed soon.

Customs playing a leading role in Digitization: Kishnani

VIS News Service

Celebrating the International Customs Day recently at Customs House, Vizag, **Mr. Suresh Kishnani**, Chief Commissioner of Customs and Central Tax, Andhra Pradesh, said that Customs organization is a leader in many aspects of digitization.

Highlighting programmes like 'SWIFT', 'e-Sanchit' and 'Turant Customs' he said all of these have been enabled on digital platforms.

He further added that Dwell time and the cost of customs clearance for the trade was considerably reduced.

'As Customs is also tasked with protecting the economic frontier, digital tools and technology are used to detect many cases and have helped in increasing national security' said the Chief Commissioner.

The Chief Commissioner also welcomed suggestions from the trade to



With the help of Digital Tools customs is further aiming to reduce the cost and dwell time for business from Customs angle.

Mr. Suresh Kishnani
Chief Commissioner of Customs & Central Tax, AP

make the digital tools better.

He thanked the officers as well as trade for the successful implementation of various initiatives in Customs Clearance, which reflected in the World Bank's 'Ease of Doing Business' ranking improving significantly for the country in 'Trading across Borders' category over the past years.

He also informed that

Customs is further aiming to reduce the cost and dwell time for the business from Customs angle, so as to reduce costing of goods thereby

peace and prosperity.

He highlighted that, Faceless Assessment system implemented by the department was stabilized this year and pendency in assessment is being monitored by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs on daily basis.

RMS Facilitation Centre and Container Scanning facility under the jurisdiction of Visakhapatnam Custom He also said that, dwell time study was conducted during the first fortnight of January, 2022 and during this time 90% import cargo was cleared within 48 hrs with Customs taking only 20% of the total dwell time and other stakeholders taking rest of the time.

The Commissioner also informed that, an outreach programme is planned shortly to further reduce the dwell time with the cooperation of all the stakeholders. In order to mitigate any issue of liquidity faced by the industry most of the refunds are processed within 30 days.

making them more competitive in international market finally helping economy and overall GDP growth.

Mr B A V Srinivasa Rao, Commissioner of Customs, Custom House, Visakhapatnam, mentioned that there is a strong link in a nation's development and Customs administration. Free and fair trade between nations contributes to national and international

HPCL's HaPpy Shop now in Vizag

VIS News Service

Giving a further push to its ambitions in non-fuel retailing, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd., recently announced the opening of two more Convenience Stores under

multi-channel Retail Stores under the brand name HaPpyShop for making available the products of daily need to its customers. The Stores are equipped with advanced technology to provide a seamless shopping experience to



its brand name 'HaPpyShop'.

The new HaPpyShop stores have been opened at Company's Auto Care Centre, Bandra West in Mumbai & Millennium Retail Outlet in Visakhapatnam.

The first Retail Store under brand name HaPpyShop was opened at the Company's Retail Outlet at Nepean Sea Road in Mumbai in September, 2021 and the Store has been a huge hit amongst the residents of the locality. The Company has decided to set up its own chain of

customers in the nearby areas.

Along with the experience of physical Store, they have the option of Online shopping with door delivery model. Customers will be able to browse & shop the merchandise on HPCL's 'HP Pay App' (available on App Store & Play Store), and have goods delivered to their homes.

Speaking on the occasion, C&MD HPCL **Mr Surana** said "HaPpyShops will provide a range of quality products to the customers at a great value."

'Need Innovation in Fire Fighting Equipment'

The Confederation of Indian Industry recently organized a Session on Fire Safety with a focus on Fire Prevention, Hazards and Risk associated through virtual mode.

Addressing the Session through virtual mode **Mr Pratap Madireddy, IPS**, Director General, State Disaster Response and Fire Services, Government of Andhra Pradesh said that Government is keen to work with industries and technical institutes to have cost effective firefighting equipment to install in their factories

As per a release from CII he suggested to have a common firefighting equipment at Industrial park level to avoid unnecessary capital expenditure for small scale units.

He also mentioned that department of Disaster Response and Fire Service is taking several innovative steps to control fire accidents at cold storages in the state.

Mr Madireddy further

opined that there is a need to encourage innovation in adopting new firefighting equipment to reduce cost for the industry.

Mr D K Mohanty, Chairman, CII Visakhapatnam Zone & Director - Commercial & Director - Personnel Additional, Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd in his welcome address pointed out that fire safety is a paramount importance for the industry. He also mentioned that industry is taking required precautions to avoid fire accidents at the factories.

Dr P P Lal Krishna, Co-Chairman, CII Andhra Pradesh Public Policy Taskforce & CEO & Managing Director, Ramky Pharma City India Ltd said that Industrial Park level safety would be beneficial to all stakeholders. Industry is keen to work with Department of Fire for having required fire safety measures at Park level, he mentioned in his address.

Container shortage persists

Contd. from Page 1

fold to get their goods shipped.

As **Mr Sameer Kumar** of PIL explains 'Vizag typically receives an inflow (import) of 60% twenty foot empty containers and 40% of forty foot empty containers



Currently we are at the mercy of foreign shipping lines. India needs to have its own shipping lines.

Mr Bobby Lawrence
Manager, Aissa Maritime P Ltd,

while the outflow (export) is 90% twenty foot laden containers and just 10% forty foot laden containers. This is where the huge imbalance is. Forty foot containers have literally no demand in Vizag' informed Mr Sameer.

The problem is glaring when one looks at the numbers. Take for instance the month of Dec' 21 wherein the total number of empty import containers (both 20ft and 40ft) received at Vizag's

container terminal was 11,148 while export of laden containers was close to 20,000, thus marking a huge shortage of about 9000 containers. These numbers were equally staggering for the month of Nov'21 wherein the import of empty containers was 6354 while export of laden

containers was 15,227. 'Vizag on an average easily sees a shortfall of about 9000 empty containers a month' noted Mr Jeevan. Similarly freight rates to various destinations across the globe have risen astoundingly with rates shooting almost four times (See Table).

There are also instances wherein liners are giving priority to countries wherein the export Invoice value is more.

Explains **Mr Bobby**



Vizag on an average sees a shortfall of about 9000 empty containers a month.

Mr. Jeevan Vikas
President, VCLA

Lawrence of Aissa Maritime, as we are typically a raw material export oriented region we lose out on countries that make finished/value added goods. This is where shipping lines get a higher invoice value and thus get drawn to those regions.

Mr Lawrence advo-

There has also being a growing clamour for India to have its own array of shipping lines. This they say will help Indian cargo get priority while also substantially reduce the country's outflow done in regards to transport services. As per some reports India remitted over USD 60 billion in transport ser-



Vizag's 20ft import inflows (empties) is about 60% while export outflow is 90%, this where the imbalance is.

Mr. Sameer Kumar
Branch Manager, PIL, Vizag

cates for working towards producing finished / value added products rather than just supplying raw material to countries who in turn value add and then re-export for bigger benefits.

vices in 2020.

'Currently we are at the mercy of foreign shipping lines. A country like Taiwan has about 6-8 shipping lines and India just has one' cited Mr Lawrence.

RADM Uthaiyah awarded AVSM

The President of India recently accorded awards to various Indian Naval personnel for their distinguished service/gallantry. Rear Admiral Uthaiyah Lychettira Belliappa, VSM was awarded the Ati Vishisht Seva Medal.

Strategic Studies.

In his 33 years of service, the Admiral has served the Indian Navy in various capacities, with appointments at the War-



RADM Uthaiyah is currently the ASD Naval Dockyard and was commissioned into the Indian Navy in Nov 1987. The Admiral holds a B Tech Degree in Marine Engineering, an M Tech Degree in Mathematical Modelling and Computer Simulation and an M Phil Degree in

ship Design Directorate, Training Academies, Naval Dockyard and at the Command and Naval Headquarters.

Inauguration of new Sub Post office



A new Departmental Sub Post Office was recently opened at Arilova wherein it was inaugurated by Visakhapatnam MP Mr. M.V.V.Satyanarayana. Speaking on the occasion, the MP admired the various services provided by the Department of Posts and also their services during the severe COVID-19 pandemic times.

The Senior Superintendent of Post Offices, Visakhapatnam Division Mr. N.Soma Sekhara Rao presided over the function and explained about various add on services being provided by the Department like Citizen Centric Services, Aadhar services and DLC (Digital Life Certificates)(Jeevan Praman) etc.,

Leveraging AI for Indian Navy

Indian Navy's premier technical training institute INS Valsura recently organised a workshop on the contemporary topic 'Leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Indian Navy' from 19 to 21 Jan 2022.

Conducted under the aegis of Southern Naval Command, speakers from renowned IT Companies like Google, IBM, Infosys and TCS shared the industry perspective during the three-day event. Distinguished academicians from IIT Delhi, New York University, Amrita University and DA- IICT also spoke about the latest trends and applications of AI.

The keynote address was delivered by Vice Admiral MA Hampiholi, Flag Officer Commanding in Chief, Southern Naval Command who stressed on the strategic importance of this niche technology and its application in the Indian Navy. The webinar conducted saw online participation by over 500 participants from across the country.

Indian Navy is focused on incorporation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) in critical mission areas.

At the Secretariat



VIS News Service

Chief Minister Mr. Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy virtually launched the Jagananna Pallavelluva programme in Anantapur district. GoAP has entered into an MoU with Amul for supplying milk for Balamrutham and anganwadis. Highlighting the fact that Amul is the eighth largest company in the world

and number one in the country the CM said that Amul is paying farmers a better remuneration in a transparent manner. He further informed that milk is being collected in Prakasam, Chittoor, Kadapa, Guntur, WG and Krishna districts. Amul's entry into Anantapur as the seventh district will benefit women said Mr Jagan.

BW Best Western PLUS
Tejuwaan
When You Crave Midnight Delicacy
CAFÉ Plus
24/7 Restaurant
98668 20099
0891 6677005
Railway Station Rd, Visakhapatnam

'Make Handicrafts accessible'

VIS News Service

Industries Minister Mr. IGautam Reddy has urged his officials to make sure that handloom, textile and handicrafts should be made more accessible to the people by embarking on innovative initiatives.

In a recent review meeting on the handloom and textile sector he said



that at present, Lepakshi and Handicrafts have different outlets and if they are combined into joint outlets, more business could be made possible. He added that training should be given to the artists so that they can develop more skills in handicrafts and doll making.

Lepakshi MD Mr. Bala Subramaniam told the minister that about 2 lakh artists are showing their skills in managing the craft clusters. On the occasion, the Minister lauded the recent Expo organized under the auspices of the Department of Handloom and Textiles.

Mr. Shashibhushan, Chief Secretary, Handloom and Textiles, Ms. Nagrani, Director, Handlooms, Textiles, Ms. Bhagyamma, Chairman, Rural Industries Board and other officers attended.

Sankar Foundation bags award



Sankar Foundation, Visakhapatnam, a Super specialty Eye Care service hospital in north coastal Andhra Pradesh received yet another recognition under social ser-

vice rendered in conducting a number of eye surgeries to the poor and needy people free of cost.

The Award and a Merit Certification was presented to Sankar Foundation by

District Collector Dr A Mallikharjuna, IAS, at the 73rd Republic Day Celebration 2022.

The award was received by Dr Nasrin, Director, Mr.K Bangar Raju, Asst GM (PR & Liaison), Mr. KV Venugopal, Asst GM (Operations) Sankar Foundation Eye Hospital. Ms. KBN Manimala, Managing Trustee & CEO, Sankar Foundation congratulated the entire collective for bagging the award.

International Customs Day at Vizag Customs

VIS News Service

The International Customs Day, 2022 was recently celebrated at Custom House,

Brokers and other stakeholders.

This year, the theme of the International Customs Day is "Scaling up Customs Digital transformation by Embracing a Data Culture and Building a Data Ecosystem".

As every year the department recognized the efforts of certain key stakeholders and handed out certificates of appreciation to the trade. The best Govt/PSU

(Importer) award was won by HPCL given to Mr



Krishanu Sen Gupta, CGM (Finance) while the best Govt/PSU (Exporter) award was given to NALCO to Mr KVS Murthy, CGM. Similarly the best private (importer) award was given to Coromandel International

Limited given to K Lakshmi Narayana, DGM (Commercial) while the best Private (exporter) award was given to HINDALCO to Mr Arun Babu, Asst. Manager.

Container Corporation of India won the transshipment of cargo award given to Mr GR Seshagiri Rao, ED. In the customs brokers category the best customs

broker (imports) award was given to Sravan Shipping Services P Ltd. to MD, Mr Samba Siva Rao, while the best customs broker (Exports)



award was given to Srivalli Shipping and Transports Ltd. to Director, Mr P Babu Rao.



Visakhapatnam through virtual mode with Officers of Customs, Importers, Exporters, Customs