SUNIL JAIN Govt inability to get things done exposed in Sebi-UTI case & by CAG in disinvestment drama

CG POWER IMBROGLIO

COMPANIES, P5

Gautam Thapar cites board approvals, rejects fund misuse allegations

INTERNATIONAL, P4 TRADE WAR

China suspends planned tariffs scheduled for Dec 15 on some US goods

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HYDERABAD, MONDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2019

FINANCIAL EXPRESS

■ IN THE NEWS

Cos law: Over 14k prosecutions withdrawn

THE GOVERNMENT on Sunday said more than 14,000 prosecutions have been withdrawn under the Companies Act as it undertook various steps to improve the ease of doing business in the country, including de-criminalisation of various penal provisions under this law, reports **PTI**. Listing out the measures taken, the corporate affairs ministry said it has set up the Central Registration Centre for name reservation and incorporation of companies and LLPs within 1-2 days, as opposed to an average of at least 15 days earlier.

CAA protest: Violence in Delhi, 6 cops injured

PROTESTORS AGITATING against the amended Citizenship Act clashed with the Delhi police on Sunday and set afire buses and a fire tender, leaving six cops and two fire personnel injured, police said, reports PTI. At a poll rally in Jharkhand on Sunday, PM Narendra Modi accused the Congress and its allies of fuelling violence in the country over the Act. He said the Opposition's actions proved the decision to pass the Bill was "1,000% correct" and those indulging in arson "can be identified by their

clothes".

REVENUE AUGMENTATION

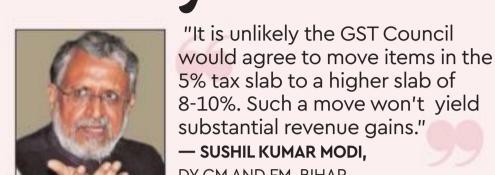
Major rejig of GST slabs unlikely for now

Several states against rates overhaul; cess, rates on some items may go up

SUMITJHA New Delhi, December 15

WHILE THE CENTRE apparently believes that nothing less than a major rejig of the goods and services tax (GST) slabs will suffice to boost collections given a big revenue shortfall, most states are unwilling to vote for such an overhaul in the GST Council meeting on Wednesday and may argue that the immediate exercise of rate changes should be a limited one.

Speaking to FE, Bihar deputy chief minister Sushil Modi said that it was unlikely the GST Council would agree to move items in the 5% tax slab to a higher slab of 8-10%, as it would put an onus on the common man and hit consumption, without yielding any substantial revenue gains. Stating that states had not suggested any rate hikes while such a proposal had been made by the GST Secretariat at

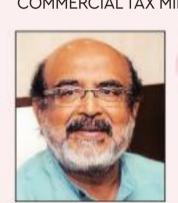


8-10%. Such a move won't yield substantial revenue gains." — SUSHIL KUMAR MODI, DY CM AND FM, BIHAR "It is unreasonable for the Council to raise the rates upwards at this juncture. Earlier, rates were pruned

unacceptable." - BRIJENDRA SINGH RATHORE, COMMERCIAL TAX MINISTER, MP

without proper consultations. The

practice of frequent rate revisions is



"My state will oppose any suggestion to raise rates of items, which are currently taxed at 5%. If rate hike is the only recourse. then the 18% slab could be moved upwards".

"It is unlikely the GST Council

— THOMAS ISAAC, FM, KERALA

the Centre, Madhya Pradesh's commercial tax minister Brijendra Singh Rathore told *FE* that it was unreasonable for the Council to raise the rates upwards at this juncture. "Earlier, rates were pruned without proper consultations due to political expediency but the practice of frequent rate revisions is not acceptable," he said. Speaking to a TV channel Continued on Page 2

last week, Kerala finance minister Thomas Isaac said that his state would oppose any suggestion to raise rates of items, which are currently taxed at 5%. However, he added that if rate hike is the only recourse then the 18% slab should be moved upwards.

LIQUIDITY HIT

Benefits to garment exporters held up

BANIKINKAR PATTANAYAK New Delhi, December 15

THE GOVERNMENT HAS held up the release of benefits worth thousands of crores to garment and made-up exporters under two major schemes — the Merchandise Export from India Scheme (MEIS) and the Rebate of State and Central Taxes & Levies (RoSCTL) — at a critical junc-

ture when exports are slipping. While MEIS gains have been held up since August, benefits under the RoSCTL, meant for compensating garment/made-up exporters for various state and central government imposts, have never been extended since its introduction in March, exporters told FE.

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Garment exports sliding (% change, y-o-y)



RELIANCE ON AID

BSNL wants govt to pay its ₹5,000-cr AGR dues

If govt pays the dues, the amount will be over and above the ₹70,000-cr bailout package for the PSU

KIRAN RATHEE New Delhi, December 15

LOSS-MAKING STATE-**OWNED TELECOM** operator Bharat Sanchar Nigam (BSNL) has approached the department of telecommunications suggesting the government pay its adjusted gross revenue dues worth around ₹5,000 crore as it has no money to pay

AGR dues of telcos (in ₹ cr) Licence fee Spectrum Reliance Airtel

on its own. It has suggested in lieu of it. the government pay on its behalf and it issue fresh equity

Continued on Page 2

EMISSION CONTROL

Power plants set to miss deadline, again

1,66,000 MW

ANUPAM CHATTERJEE New Delhi, December 15

WITH THE DECEMBER 31 deadline for installing emission reduction equipment in coal-based power plants with combined capacity of 14,000 megawatt (MW) looming, over 90% of the capacities have yet to do so, meaning thereby that unless the Central Electricity Authority relaxes the rule, they will require to shut down by the year-end. According to the

Combined capacity of coal-fired power plants required to install emission reduction equipment by 2022 14,000 MW Capacity of power units with Dec 31, 2019 as deadline; 90% seen missing the deadline ₹27-45 lakh

data compiled by the CEA among the non-compliant capacities, 6,100 MW belongs to state governments, 3,300 MW to NTPC and the remaining to private companies.

Among the power plants given the deadline to cut emission levels, 11 with total capac ity of 12,800 MW are located in Haryana, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh.

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HYDERABAD



■ BRANDWAGON, P10

Cut to: OTT movie premieres

Why film studios are partnering with OTT players for digital-only movie premieres

■ eFE, P8

Making businesses work better

Mahindra Electric and Freshworks have leveraged AWS Cloud to become more agile and innovate faster

PERSONAL FINANCE, P9

Choose your TPA for health plan

However, if an insurer engages the services of only one TPA, you will have to stick with that TPA

■ INFRASTRUCTURE, P11

Room for global players

Relaxation of rules and privatisation of BPCL should spur investments by international majors in oil retailing

■ SCIENCE & TECH, P12

Cold and distant

India needs to show interest as the world embarks towards greater uncertainty in the Antarctic region

APMC REFORMS

Some headway made; inter-state trade distant goal

PRABHUDATTA MISHRA New Delhi, December 15

THIRTY-THREE **MONTHS AFTER** the Centre formulated a model law for the much-needed reforms in agriculture marketing and asked all states to emulate it, most states are still in the throes of making the prescribed changes in their laws and actually implementing them.

Among the major states, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Odisha, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh have complied with the four key reforms mooted in the Centre's model law, namely deregulation of fruits and veg-

etables trade, facility for anyone to set up private market outside the purview of APMC mandis, single trading licence to enable inter-mandi trade and singlepoint levy of market fee.

However, even these states haven't taken all the follow-up actions required to actually meet the reform objectives for example, even as the state's APMClaw provides for it, Maharashtra is yet to issue unified (allmandi) licence for traders, whereas less than 1% of licences in Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat are unified ones.

Continued on Page 2

Implementation status*

implementation status"				
	De-regulation of fruits & vegetables	Private mandis	Single trading licence	Single-point levy of market fee
● UP	×	V	V	V
• MP	V	X	V	V
Punjab	×	V	V	V
Maharashtra	V	V	V	~
■ Tamil Nadu	X	X	V	V
W Bengal	V	V	V	V
Delhi	1	V	~	V

*J&K, Meghalaya and Puducherry have not adopted any reforms suggested by Centre in their APMC laws; Bihar and Kerala had repealed their APMC Acts before the Centre's model law.

APMC Acts amendments don't ensure reforms: For instance. Maharashtra, West Bengal & Punjab have not issued unified trading licence to any trader after amending the laws for this pupose

BOLLYWOOD

You don't need a superstar to get a ₹100-cr grosser

ASMITA DEY New Delhi, December 15

THAT AUDIENCES HAVE been preferring a good storyline and

script to superstars and larger-

BOX OFFICE

COLLECTION

than-life sets has been clear for some time now. Ten years after debutant Ranveer Singh and newcomer Anushka Sharma's Band Baaja Baaraat gave Salman Khan's Veer a run for its

money in 2010, the trend is only getting bigger. And it's no longer about superstars, it's about budget superstars.

Veer fetched a little over ₹35 crore in net gross collections,

crore while *BBB* earned ₹23.16 crore on a budget of ₹15 crore. In 2012 when Bollywood brought alive the concept of sperm donor on the silver screen, Ayushmann Khurrana's debut movie Vicky Donor went on to win the National Award. Sujoy Ghosh's Kahaani, also released in the same year, was among the best thrillers seen steeped in suspense, set amidst the nondescript lanes of Kolkata with a cast of mostly

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Dubai Duty Free

local actors.