

(This document comprises news clips from various media in which Balmer Lawrie is mentioned, news related to GOI and PSEs, and news from the verticals that we do business in. This will be e-mailed on every Monday.)

PSU buyback: Govt taking money out of the back door

Desperate to meet its divestment target and reduce the fiscal deficit, the finance ministry is discussing plans to introduce a 'buyback of shares' in Coal India, NMDC and NHPC. Ideally, buyback under normal circumstances will be applicable to all class of shareholders except promoters of the company. But in this case, government has bent the rule and is making companies use their cash reserves to buyback promoter's (government) shares.

Business Standard - 03.09.2013

http://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/psu-buyback-govt-taking-money-out-of-the-back-door-113090300436_1.html

India mulls new company to aid global acquisitions

The government is mulling setting up a new company, loosely modelled on the concept of a sovereign wealth fund, to finance the acquisition of overseas resources such as oil, gas and coal. The proposed Indian Overseas Investment Corp Ltd (INOIC) will be wholly owned by the government and administered by the Ministry of Finance, officials told PTI.

Free Press Journal - 05.09.2013

<http://freepressjournal.in/india-mulls-new-company-to-aid-global-acquisitions/>

RBI eases FDI norms, allows banks to issue guarantees for NRIs investments

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) today eased foreign direct investment (FDI) norms and allowed banks to provide guarantees on behalf of non-resident Indians (NRIs) to acquire shares and debentures in Indian companies. "In order to provide operational flexibility and ease the procedures, it has been decided to permit banks to issue bank guarantee, without prior approval of the Reserve Bank, on behalf of a non-resident acquiring shares or convertible debentures of an

Several CPSEs seek fixed three-year tenure for serving CMDs

Amid the government mulling giving a fixed three-year tenure for PSU heads in future appointments, several Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) have sought similar tenure for currently serving CMDs. "There is a demand from certain Public Sector Units (PSUs) that the serving Chairman-and-Managing Directors should also get three-year extension," an official told PTI. The present proposal is only for new appointments for the top-post.

Business Standard - 08.09.2013

http://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/several-cpses-look-for-fixed-three-year-tenure-for-serving-cmds-113090800178_1.html

Gloom and doom view on Indian economy overdone: Raghuram Rajan

While acknowledging that the country faces challenges, Raghuram Rajan, RBI Governor on Wednesday assured that Indian economy remains fundamentally strong. Addressing the media soon after taking charge at RBI, Rajan said, "This is not an easy time to take charge as RBI Governor." Rajan said that while the primary objective of the central bank remains monetary stability, inclusive growth & development and financial stability also form part of RBI's role. "The financial markets are volatile, there is domestic uncertainty," he said.

Economic Times - 04.09.2013

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2013-09-04/news/41765712_1_d-subbarao-raghuram-rajan-rbi-governor

2,931 companies at India Inc record 2% fall in net profit in 2012-13: RBI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) today said 2,931 listed private non-financial companies at India Inc have recorded a decline of 2 per cent in net profit to Rs 1,74,800 crore in 2012-13. "Most of the industries followed the general trend of lower sales growth and lower profit margins (EBITDA) in 2012-13 as compared to 2011-12," the central bank said in a report titled 'Performance of the Private Corporate Business Sector during 2012-13'.

Indian company through open offers/delisting/exit offers," the RBI said in a notification.

Financial Express - 05.09.2013

<http://www.financialexpress.com/news/rbi-eases-fdi-norms-allows-banks-to-issue-guarantees-for-nris-investments/1165144>

Babus, PSU chiefs learn leadership skills from top B-schools

Premier business schools of the country such as Indian Institutes of Management and Indian School of Business have a new set of visitors coming to sharpen their leadership skills —top rung officials of public sector companies and government departments. From Hindustan Aeronautics (HAL) and Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) to Indian Police Service and Indian Foreign Service, government sector organisations are investing heavily on leadership development to prepare themselves for future challenges in a fast changing economic and market environment.

Economic Times - 03.09.2013

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2013-09-03/news/41726615_1_leadership-development-isb-deepak-chandra

IRCTC registers record 5.72 lakh e-ticket bookings on Sept 2, 2013

The e-ticketing website of Indian Railway Catering & Tourism Corporation Ltd (IRCTC), www.irctc.co.in, has booked the highest number of tickets in a day, as per a release. The record booking of 5.72 lakh e-tickets have been achieved yesterday, surpassing the earlier highest of 5.04 lakh record of August 12, 2013. This is the third time it booked more than five lakh tickets this year, the first time it was on March 1.

Travel Biz Monitor - 03.09.2013

<http://www.travelbizmonitor.com/irctc-registers-record-572-lakh-eticket-bookings-on-sept-2-2013-21559>

Airlines set fare limit beyond which they cannot charge you

You will no longer have to worry about arbitrary airfare hikes as domestic airlines on Saturday set a cap on the maximum fare that they can charge fliers. The move came after carriers were asked by the aviation regulator to set an upper limit on fares across all routes. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) asked seven domestic airlines to set the limit and upload the details on their websites after most of them hiked fares by around 25% in three days. The carriers had increased fares citing the weakening value of the rupee, increase in jet fuel costs and the poor financial situation.

Hindustan Times - 08.09.2013

Financial Express - 05.09.2013

<http://www.financialexpress.com/news/2931-companies-at-india-inc-record-2-fall-in-net-profit-in-201213-rbi/1165141>

Air fares to rise next month as ATF prices touch all-time high

Get set for sky high air fares from next month when the peak travel period kicks off with the festive season. Oil companies have hiked aviation turbine fuel (ATF) prices by 7%, taking the prices of jet fuel — which is the single largest component of an airline's operating cost — to an all-time high. Now ATF per kilo-litre costs Rs 75,031 in Delhi; Rs 77,632.4 in Mumbai and is the steepest in Kolkata at Rs 85,645.1.

The Times of India - 03.09.2013

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/Air-fares-to-rise-next-month-as-ATF-prices-touch-all-time-high/articleshow/22243702.cms>

SpiceJet hikes fares by 30%, Jet, AI to follow suit

Airlines have started raising air fares by anywhere up to 30% with immediate effect following the massive increase in price of jet fuel, which is now at an all-time high. Low-cost carrier (LCC) SpiceJet raised both spot and advance purchase fares from Tuesday evening by over 25%. Jet Airways said it was planning a hike shortly.

The Times of India - 04.09.2013

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/SpiceJet-hikes-fares-by-30-Jet-AI-to-follow-suit/articleshow/22276649.cms>

Cancelling an air ticket will now cost you Rs 500 more

Not just booking, even cancelling a flight has become costlier. Days after hiking air fares by more than 20 per cent, airlines have increased cancellation charges on domestic flights from Rs 1,000 to Rs 1,500. SpiceJet was the first off the block. In a mail to travel partners, the airline said: "The fee for changes and cancellation has been revised to Rs 1,500 per person, per sector. This is applicable for all domestic bookings, irrespective of origin of sale or travel date. The changes have been updated on our Web site at all applicable places."

The Hindu Business Line - 07.09.2013

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/industry>

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/business-news/SectorsAviation/Airlines-set-fare-limit-beyond-which-they-cannot-charge-you/Article1-1119071.aspx>

Tour operators offer packages with fixed rate of exchange

Scared to plan a holiday abroad amidst depreciating rupee? Fret not. Tour is trying to lure customers with packages that have been designed keeping the currency fluctuations in mind, with value additions that reduce impact of the depreciating rupee. In their attempt to sweeten the deal, travel firms have come up with offers like fixed rate of exchange for dollar and rupee for limited periods, or are trying to promote destinations whose currencies have been more stable compared to the Indian rupee, like Australia and New Zealand.

Business Standard - 08.09.2013

http://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/tour-operators-offer-packages-with-fixed-rate-of-exchange-113090800723_1.html

BC Tripathi may get a second term as Gail CMD

Ten months before his term expires, Gail India Chairman and Managing Director, B C Tripathi, has been recommended by the Ministry for Petroleum and Natural Gas for a second term at the company. Gail is nation's biggest natural gas distributor. Tripathi, considered the youngest chairman of a Navaratna PSU, took over the reins of Gail at the age of 49 on August 1, 2009. Tripathi's term as Gail India Chairman and MD was to expire in July 31, 2014.

Business Standard - 03.09.2013

http://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/bc-tripathi-may-get-a-second-term-as-gail-cmd-113090300240_1.html

Sandhu becomes first woman Chief Information Commissioner

Deepak Sandhu, who has been an information commissioner for the last four years, on Thursday became the first woman Chief Information Commissioner of the country. A former Indian Information Service officer of 1971 batch, Ms. Sandhu had served in many key positions such as Principal Director General (Media and Communications) in the Press Information Bureau, Director General of DD (News), Director General (News) All India Radio before taking over as Information Commissioner in 2009.

The Hindu - 05.09.2013

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/sandhu-becomes-first-woman-chief-information->

[-and-economy/cancelling-an-air-ticket-will-now-cost-you-rs-500-more/article5104513.ece?homepage=true](http://www.hindustantimes.com/and-economy/cancelling-an-air-ticket-will-now-cost-you-rs-500-more/article5104513.ece?homepage=true)

Tuticorin port sets cargo handling record

Tuticorin's V. O. Chidambaranar Port Trust has set a record in the handling of cargo in a single day. According to S. Natarajan, Chairman, V.O. Chidambaranar Port Trust, the port handled 1,39,610 tonnes of cargo, surpassing the previous record of 1,17,641 tonnes achieved on 11.07.2009.

The Hindu Business Line - 04.09.2013

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/industry-and-economy/logistics/tuticorin-port-sets-cargo-handling-record/article5093581.ece>

Dinesh Sarraf to be next ONGC chief

The Public Enterprises Selection Board on Friday recommended Dinesh K Sarraf as the next head of the country's most valuable company, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC). The government headhunter's decision signals support for the ONGC Videsh MD's aggressive stance on overseas acquisitions and preference for a person with a clean image to steer a company with \$6-7 billion annual expenditure.

The Times of India - 31.08.2013

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/Dinesh-Sarraf-to-be-next-ONGC-chief/articleshow/22177120.cms>

Provide RTI stamps as application fee: CIC

In an order that could make filing of Right To Information (RTI) applications easier, the Central Information Commission has asked the department of post to issue RTI stamps of Rs. 10 denomination and open separate counters for accepting the applications at its 1.5 lakh post offices. A three-member bench headed by chief information commissioner Satyananda Mishra has issued a series of directions to the government, after complaints that public information officers were turning down applications on flimsy grounds.

Hindustan Times - 05.09.2013

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/India->

commissioner/article5096767.ece

Contributions to relief funds, social business projects to be CSR

Contributions to the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund and initiatives to empower women and promote gender equality, among others, will be considered as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities. The new Companies Act 2013, which requires certain class of companies to make social welfare spending, has listed a set of activities that can be considered as CSR.

Economic Times - 06.09.2013

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2013-09-06/news/41835304_1_gender-equality-national-relief-fund-new-companies

news/NewDelhi/Open-separate-counters-for-RTI-applications-CIC/Article1-1117858.aspx

A third of employers don't communicate with staff on benefits: Survey

Effective communication plays a very important role in determining the compensation package, yet almost a third of employers do not communicate with employees about their benefits, says a survey by global professional services company Towers Watson. According to the survey, there exists a positive correlation between the perceived value of benefits and effective communication in the organisations surveyed.

Economic Times - 05.09.2013

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2013-09-05/news/41802716_1_employers-global-professional-services-company-survey