

RailTel secures Rs 288 crore 'Kavach' project to enhance railway safety

NEW DELHI, Feb 22 (IANS)

RAILTEL Corporation of India Limited (RailTel), a public sector undertaking under the Railway Ministry, has secured a Rs 288 crore contract to install the Kavach anti-collision system across 71 stations.

The project will cover 502 route kilometers (RKM) of train tracks under the Danapur and Sonpur divisions of East Central Railway, according to a RailTel filing with the exchanges.

Kavach is an advanced automatic train protection system designed to prevent train collisions. It automatically applies brakes when a train passes a signal at danger or if there is a risk



of collision.

RailTel described this as one of its largest signalling projects. The implementation of the Kavach system is expected to enhance railway safety and improve operational efficiency.

"The Kavach tender, valued at approximately Rs 288 crore, is one of RailTel's largest signalling projects," said the company.

Implementing this system will enhance safety and improve the East Central Railway's overall operational efficiency.

According to RailTel, this advanced technology will cover a vast network within the East Central Railway and will ensure passenger safety.

First session of new Delhi Assembly to begin on 24th

CAG reports to be tabled

NEW DELHI, Feb 22 (PTI)

THE first session of the eighth Legislative Assembly of Delhi will begin on Monday with newly elected members taking oath at 11 am, said a bulletin issued by the House secretariat.

The three-day session will see the election of the House Speaker and deputy Speaker as well as the tabling of the 14 pending CAG reports on the performance of the previous AAP Government.

BJP leaders said the party has nominated senior MLAs Vijender Gupta and Mohan Singh Bisht for the election of the speaker and deputy speaker, respectively.

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta will move the motion for Gupta to be chosen as speaker and minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa will second it on February 24, said Assembly's list of business.

Petrol prices in India among lowest in the world: Union Minister Puri

NEW DELHI, Feb 22 (IANS)

PETROLEUM prices in India are among the lowest in the world, said Union Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri. Addressing a press conference in Vijaywada, Andhra Pradesh, he said that fuel prices in the country have reduced both in absolute terms and in real terms over the years.

Speaking about the global oil supply, Puri mentioned that more oil is now coming from countries like the US, Brazil, Guyana, Suriname, and Canada.

Stating that "there is no shortage of oil", and that about 40 countries now supply oil to India, from the earlier 27, Puri added that "we welcome if more countries join". This will also help lower the prices, he said. "In fact, petroleum prices have come



down during the last three years," the Union Minister added.

He further stated that a negative growth of -0.67 per cent was witnessed with regard to petrol prices while price of diesel increased marginally by 1.15 per cent. Puri also clarified that Government does not gain any financial benefit from petroleum sales. On the contrary,

Government had to provide Rs 22,000 crore to oil companies.

Referring to India's economic progress, Puri recalled that in 2014, when Prime Minister Narendra Modi took charge, India was the 10th largest economy and considered one of "Fragile Five" economies a term used for countries highly dependent on foreign invest-

ments for growth. "The Indian economy developed significantly under PM Modi's rule. It was 10th largest economy then," Puri added. He stated that India's place improved and country has made strident steps since then, from the 10th largest economy to fourth largest. "India will soon achieve a \$4 trillion economy," he noted. Meanwhile, a report by Fitch Ratings said that India's demand for petroleum products is expected to rise by three to four per cent in current financial year ending on March 31, 2025. India's Oil Marketing Companies are likely to witness a decline in refinery margins in FY25 due to multiple challenges, including weaker product cracks, an oversupply in the region, and reduced gains from variations in crude oil prices, the report added.

Army to boost air defence capabilities with new guns, potent radars

NEW DELHI, Feb 22 (PTI)

WITH drones and other disruptive technologies impacting the dynamics of warfare as demonstrated in recent conflicts, the Army Air Defence has drawn a roadmap to boost its capabilities through replacement of two of its old platforms, induction of new fragmentation ammunition for existing air defence guns, and deployment of more potent radars.

Besides, the Army is also hoping to place a contract for the indigenously developed Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missile (QRSAM) system within 4-5 months, a top official said on Friday.

The Corps of Army Air Defence holds a large variety of missile systems and guns in its



inventory such as the L70, ZU-23mm, Schilka, Tunguska and Osa-AK missile system.

"The fashion of guns is back. The Army sustained them for good reason and these guns can be effectively used with frag-

mentation ammunition," Director General of Army Air Defence (AAD), Lt Gen Sumer Ivan D'Cunha, said.

Asserting the need for modernisation with an emphasis on 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat', Lt Gen

D'Cunha also cautioned that the Indian industry must offer "reduced timelines" when it comes to delivery.

The AAD, initially part of the Territorial Army, was later separated from the Artillery in 1994 as a separate corps that looks after destruction of air threat "before it manifests", officials said.

The Army is planning to replace the L70 and ZU-23mm with "successor" platforms. However, as of now, it is not looking to import, as far as guns are concerned, they said.

The first trials of the indigenous successor platform to replace the old L70 guns is likely to be carried out in July, the officials said, adding that an RFP (request for proposal) is already out for the procurement of 220 such guns.

India, Japan joint military exercise to be held from Feb 24-Mar 9



NEW DELHI, Feb 22 (PTI)

INDIA and Japan are set to take part in a joint military exercise starting February 24, aiming to enhance interoperability between the two forces while undertaking joint urban warfare and counter-terrorism operations under UN mandate.

The exercise underscores the shared commitment of India

and Japan towards regional security, peace and stability while advancing their common vision of a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific, the Defence Ministry said in a statement on Saturday.

The Indian Army contingent departed on Saturday for the sixth edition of the India-Japan Joint Military Exercise 'Dharma Guardian'.

PM Modi on 3-day visit to MP, Bihar, Assam from today

NEW DELHI, Feb 22 (PTI)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi will be on a three-day visit to Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Assam from Sunday to attend several development initiatives, including the global investors summit in Bhopal and the release of 19th instalment of cash assistance to farmers in Bhagalpur.

In Madhya Pradesh on Sunday, Modi will lay the foundation stone of Bageshwar Dham Medical and Science Research Institute in Chhatarpur and inaugurate the investors summit on Monday, a statement said. He will release the 19th instalment of 'PM KISAN' scheme at an event in Bhagalpur on Monday and also inaugurate various development projects in Bihar before travelling to Assam.

He will attend the 'Jhumoir Binandini' on Monday evening and inaugurate the investment and infrastructure summit the next day. Modi will inaugurate

Advantage Assam 2.0 Investment and Infrastructure Summit in Guwahati on Tuesday.

The PMO said the two-day Global Investors Summit (GIS) in Bhopal will serve as an important platform to establish Madhya Pradesh as a global investment hub and will include departmental summits, specialised sessions on pharma and medical devices, transport and logistics, industry, skill development, tourism and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) among others.

It will also include international sessions focusing on the Global South countries, Latin America and the Caribbean besides special sessions for key partner countries. Three major industrial exhibitions will be held during the summit -- the auto show, the textile and fashion expo and one on 'One District-One Product' (ODOP) to showcase the State's unique craftsmanship and cultural heritage.