

G20 boost: India prepares for 4th summit with African Union

Long delayed, the key meet likely in Nairobi in three months

SUBHAYAN CHAKRABORTY
New Delhi, 2 October

Keen to capitalise on the growing geopolitical support from African nations after the recently concluded G20 summit, India is working with the African Union to hold the fourth India-Africa Forum Summit later this year in Kenya's Nairobi, sources said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to attend the mega meet along with as many as 50 African leaders, they added. First held in New Delhi in 2008, the India-Africa Forum Summit marked India's initial diplomatic efforts to seek a comprehensive partnership with the African bloc of nations as a whole, at a time when China had begun its own outreach.

Subsequently, the second and third summits were held in the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa in 2011 and New Delhi in 2015. But despite a plan to hold it every three

years, the summit has been postponed since then owing to the Covid pandemic, among other reasons. The upcoming summit will be held in late November or early December, the sources said. "There had been an expectation that the fourth summit would be held during India's presidency of the G20 when engagements between Africa and India reached unprecedented levels. A summit would showcase the diverse and strong ties that have grown between both the powers in the past eight years," a senior diplomat from an African embassy posted in New Delhi said.

In January, India virtually held the 'Voice of the Global South' summit, which was attended by 47 of the 54 African nations. Their recommendations were adapted into India's official G20 agenda. Subsequently, a sustained push by India saw the African Union being inducted as a permanent G20 member. Before this, only one country, South



PM Narendra Modi (right) with Azali Assoumani, chairperson of the African Union, during the G20 summit in New Delhi

Africa, from the entire African continent had been part of the G20.

Trade and infra ties

The government is working on initiatives aiming to deepen economic relations and infrastructure ties between India and Africa, which may be announced at the summit, an official said. While Africa is a huge market encompassing a \$3 trillion economy and 1.3 billion people, internal trade between African economies remains

much lower than their trade with external partners. Meanwhile, its trade with China has massively increased to make Beijing Africa's second-largest trading partner overall, after the European Union.

New Delhi hopes to change that by pitching India as an alternative source for many product categories, which are located geographically closer. As of 2022, India was the third-largest trading partner for Africa, accounting for 7 per cent of exports (\$32.3 billion)

and 5 per cent of imports (\$28 billion), a paper by the International Monetary Fund showed in May.

The Exim Bank, which provides export financing and government-directed lending to other countries, is already supporting over 300 small Indian companies to expand business in Africa. With nearly \$75 billion of investments by Indian companies, India is among the top five investors in Africa.

The official G20 dialogue forum with the global business community, the Business20 (B20), had extensively worked on African economic integration under India's G20 presidency. The subject has evinced special interest from the Prime Minister since it is an area where he wants to leave a legacy, Bharti Airtel Chairman Sunil Bharti Mittal, who headed the B20 council, had earlier told *Business Standard*.

Sources said B20 suggestions in this regard would be discussed at the upcoming summit and efforts made to deploy Indian solutions to key socio-economic challenges, wherever necessary.

Dagga case shows why removing govt officers from service isn't easy

SUBHOMOY BHATTACHARJEE
New Delhi, 2 October

The recent compulsory retirement of Rinku Dagga from service conveys a message of penalty, but she is not the first officer whose services have been terminated in this manner since 2020 when the rules governing government officers were expanded. She is one of 88.

Dagga, an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer, and her husband, Sanjeev Khirwar (also an IAS officer), had made headlines last year for reportedly getting sportspeople to finish training early so that they could walk their dog in a stadium in New Delhi. While Khirwar was transferred to Ladakh, Dagga, who was earlier sent to Arunachal Pradesh, has now been compulsorily retired.

The new rules for such compulsory retirement clarify that these orders are not necessarily offered "as a penalty under CCS (CCA) [Central Civil Services (Classification, Control and Appeal)] Rules, 1965 (which) is distinct from these provisions".

Dagga's service has been terminated under Fundamental Rules (or FR) 56(j), Rule 48 of Central Civil Services (CCS) Pension Rules, 1972, in "public interest". So, unless the office concerned, which in this case is the Department of Personnel and Training, decides otherwise, it is considered a termination and not a penalty. This action is the toughest that the government could have taken since the rules governing the protection of service of state government officials in India are stringent. Dagga is a 1994 batch Arunachal Pradesh-Goa-Mizoram and Union Territory (AGMUT) cadre officer.

The compulsory retirement is part of a half-yearly exercise nowadays, done for cases where the government wants to get rid of officers, but without taking the disciplinary proceedings route. As a review by the Department of Personnel and Training a few years ago noted, a Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) manual prescribes that disciplinary proceedings have "a realistic time schedule of nearly 25 months for completion".

The compulsory retirement route offers a way out. Every six months, departments can conduct the weeding-out exercise for officers, but after the officer "attains the age of 50/55 years or completes 30 years of service, whichever occurs earlier". Dagga is 50-plus.

The Section used against Dagga, as reported to Parliament, notes, "The objective of the review process under the FR 56(j) (or) similar provisions is to bring efficiency and to strengthen the administrative machinery". As the table (service record) shows, in the three-year period from April 2020 to March 2023, this section has been applied on 122 officers.

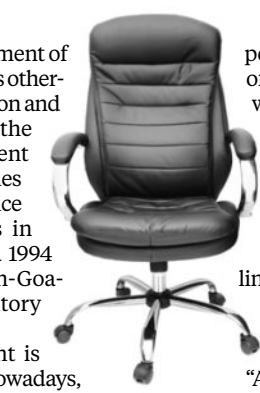
What do the Sections say?

There are two provisions in the Fundamental Rules that guide how the government can deal with the removal of officers from the central civil services.

There is Section FR 56 (k), which allows an employee to retire from service voluntarily with all pension benefits before attaining the age of retirement. And, there is Section FR 56 (j), which notes that "the appropriate authority has the absolute right to retire, if it is necessary to do so in public interest, any government employee". The caveat is that FR-56 (j) and the related All India Services (Discipline and Appeal) Rules, 1969, for putting out an officer to pasture apply to those officer whose "performance has been reviewed and found unsatisfactory". The operative word is "public interest".

The National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government has tried to revise these stiff rules to ensure there are at least specific timelines in the procedures related to disciplinary proceedings, according to a Parliament reply. Yet, as a former government employee pointed out, "Asking an officer to leave while keeping their pension intact does not mean much."

The pension gets reduced to two-thirds only if the government, after consultation with the Union Public Service Commission, decides that "the retirement benefits shall be paid at such reduced scales as may not be less than two-thirds of the retirement benefits under FR 18 and 19".

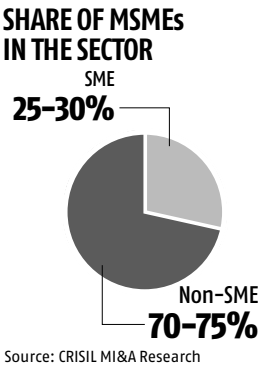


CRISIL SME TRACKER

Revving up: Outlook, opportunities for auto component SMEs in 2024

After a robust 16-18 per cent growth fuelled by strong demand from automobile original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) in financial year 2023, SMEs in the auto component sector anticipate an 8-10 per cent growth in fiscal year 2024. Domestic demand from passenger vehicles will continue to rise, building upon the all-time highs of fiscal year 2023. Commercial vehicles are set to exceed pre-Covid levels, while two-wheelers will continue to recover but remain below their 2019 highs. Despite facing several challenges, export demand in 2024 is expected to show moderate growth, buoyed by a modest increase in demand from the US, Germany, Italy, and Japan. OEMs are exploring new sourcing opportunities to enhance the diversification of their supply chains. This shift is driven by improvements observed in vital

components like engines, gearboxes, and transmissions. Tight global conditions prevent further expansion. The replacement market is expected to modestly increase in 2024, following its improvement in 2023, driven by higher sales in FY19. SMEs in the sector account for approximately 25-30 per cent of the total industry turnover, mainly in suspension, braking, and body/chassis segments. Auto component makers are categorised into tier-1, tier-2, and tier-3. Most Indian OEMs source components from tier-1 manufacturers, who, in turn, have tier-2 suppliers, followed by tier-3 manufacturers in their supply chains. Margins for auto component manufacturers are expected to improve due to correction in raw material costs, improved offtake leading to higher capacity utilisation.



EAST COAST RAILWAY

File No. DRM/Engg/KUR/23-24/
E-Tender/85, Dtd. 26.09.2023

(1) Tender No. : e-Tender-CENTKUR-265-2023, Dtd. 22.09.2023

Description : PROPOSED RAISING OF PLATFORM FROM LOW LEVEL TO HIGH LEVEL OF PLATFORM NO. 2 & 3 AT MERAMANDALI STATION AND PLATFORM NO. 2 & 3 AT HINDOL ROAD STATION OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.

Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 237.82 Lakh, EMD: ₹ 2,68,900.00.

(2) Tender No. : e-Tender-EASTKUR-275-2023, Dtd. 21.09.2023

Description : PROPOSED CONVERSION AND REBUILDING OF 9 NOS. C.I PIPE BRIDGES INTO RCC BOX BRIDGES ON UP & DN LINE BETWEEN JENAPUR-KENDRAPARA ROAD STATION AND 4 NOS. ON UP LINE BETWEEN KANDARAPUR-BADAKHANDAITA STATION UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF DIVISIONAL ENGINEER (EAST) OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.

Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 395.44 Lakh, EMD: ₹ 3,47,700.00.

(3) Tender No. : e-Tender-EASTKUR-279-2023, Dtd. 21.09.2023

Description : PROPOSED REBUILDING OF 05 NOS. STONE SLAB BRIDGES AND 10 NOS. HUMEP/PIPE/SLAB BRIDGES ON JENAPUR-CUTTACK DN LINE SECTION UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF DIVISIONAL ENGINEER (EAST) OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.

Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 487.46 Lakh, EMD: ₹ 3,93,700.00.

(4) Tender No. : e-Tender-hq-kur-278-2023, Dtd. 21.09.2023

Description : REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE WATER SUPPLY WORKS OF MISCELLANEOUS NATURE AND SUPPLIES INCLUDING OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF WATER TREATMENT PLANT, DAYA PUMP HOUSE & RCC OH WATER TANK OF RAILWAY STATION, DISTRIBUTION OF WATER SUPPLY TO DIFFERENT ZONES OF KHURDA ROAD SETTLEMENT INCLUDING MAINTENANCE OF RAISING WATER PIPE LINES FROM DAYA PUMP HOUSE TO FILTER HOUSE & DELIVERY LINES OF PUMPS AT FILTER HOUSE AND RCC OH TANK AT KHURDA ROAD EACH COSTING RS. 5,00,000/- OR LESS AT KHURDA ROAD UNDER SENIOR SECTION ENGINEER/WWW/KHURDA ROAD IN SR. DIVISIONAL ENGINEER (HQ)/KHURDA ROAD'S SECTION FOR THE PERIOD UPTO 30/06/2024.

Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 105.13 Lakh, EMD: ₹ 2,02,600.00.

Completion period : 08 (Eight) Months (for sl. no. 1), 12 (Twelve) Months (for sl. no. 2 & 3) and 09 (Nine) Months (for sl. no. 4).

Tender closing Date & Time : At 1500 hrs. of 13.10.2023 (for all sl. nos.).

No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : <http://www.ireps.gov.in>

The tenderers/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered on IREPS portal. Only registered tenderers/bidders can participate on e-tendering.

Note : The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 10 (Ten) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigendum issued for this tender.

Divisional Railway Manager (Engg.)
PR-632/O/23-24 Khurda Road

TENDER CARE

— Advertisorial —

INDIAN BANK OBSERVES ONE HOUR SHRAMDAAAN AS PART OF SWACHHATA HI SEVA (SHS) CAMPAIGN 2023

Indian Bank participated actively in "Ek Tareekh Ek Ghanta", organized under the aegis of the Swachhata Hi Seva (SHS) campaign, to commemorate the 9th anniversary of Swachh Bharat Mission. On 01st October 2023, Indian Bank continued its engagement in the SHS campaign with another significant event, 'One hour Shramdaan' at Rani Meeyammai Girls Higher Secondary School, Chennai led by Shri. S. L. Jain, MD & CEO of Indian Bank and Executive Directors Shri Imran Amin Siddiqui, Shri Mahesh Kumar Bajaj, and Shri Ashutosh Choudhury, along with customers and other Senior Officials of the Bank. After the Shramdaan, School bags were distributed to the students of the school, belonging to underprivileged sections of the society.



CENTRAL BANK OF INDIA, ZONAL OFFICE, CHENNAI, EMBARKS ON SWACHHATA MISSION AT MARINA BEACH

Central Bank of India's Zonal Office, Chennai, spearheaded a comprehensive cleanliness campaign at the iconic Marina Beach. This initiative, conducted under the Swachhata Mission drive, brought together dedicated staff members from the Zonal Office and Regional Office, who worked tirelessly towards creating a cleaner and more vibrant environment. Led by Mr. Arvind Kumar, Zonal Head, and Mr. Santosh Srivastava, Regional Head, Mr. Arvind Kumar addressed the gathered volunteers and underscored the paramount importance of cleanliness in our lives. He emphasized that a clean environment not only enhances the quality of life but also reflects a profound sense of civic responsibility. The campaign witnessed active participation from staff members and their family members who wholeheartedly contributed their time and efforts.



NMDC JOINS INDIA'S 'SWACHHATA HI SEWA' CAMPAIGN

Leading CPSE, NMDC joins the National Swachhata Movement - Swachhata Hi Sewa from September 15 to October 2, 2023. As a part of Swachhata Hi Seva Campaign, employees pledged to devote 2 hours per week towards cleanliness for a clean and green nation at its Head Office and Projects across country. In the spirit of Shramdaan, NMDC employees started the campaign at their workplace by cleaning their desks, cabinets, offices and workshops. On the Swachh Bharat/Abhiyan, company's CMD (Additional Charge) Shri Amitava Mukherjee said, "We must come together and devote our resources towards a Clean India, Green India. With large-scale Swachhata drives, NMDC is proud to be taking part in the National Cleanliness Movement." NMDC will also be conducting a nationwide cleanliness drive, 1 Tareekh 1 Ghanta 1 Saath on 1st October where one village by each project in the respective locations- Kirandul and Bacheli in Chhattisgarh, Donimalai in Karnataka and Panna in Madhya Pradesh will be covered.



SWACHATA HI SEVA (SHS) - ONE HOUR SHRAMDAAAN BY CANARA BANK

Canara Bank having it's Head Office at Bengaluru organized Swachhata Hi Seva campaign ("Ek Tareek, Ek Ghanta") on 1st October, 2023 at 10 am Pan India with theme "Garbage Free India". Shri K Satyanarayana Raju, Managing Director & CEO along with all Executive Directors, Chief General Managers, General Managers, other Executives and staff including Bengaluru citizens have participated in cleanliness drive at Krishna Rao Park, Dewan Madhava Rao Road and Netkalappa Circle, near Dwarakanath Bhavan, Basawanagudi, Bengaluru which was a grand success. More than 500 participants have cleaned the entire area, collected the garbage. The collected garbage is segregated into different categories viz. dry waste, plastic and stacked in dumping yard of Krishna Rao Park for further processing & disposal



KARNATAKA BANK ENABLES PAYMENT OF GOODS AND SERVICES TAX (GST)



Karnataka Bank has enabled the service of collection of Goods and Services Tax (GST) through multiple modes of collections such as Over the Counter (OTC) and through Internet Banking facility. Now, all the customers of Karnataka Bank can pay GST at their convenience through Internet Banking facility or through all Branches of the Bank.

Speaking on the occasion Shri Srikrishnan H, Managing Director & CEO, said, "This is an important move to improving the overall customer experience and a very critical value addition. While this facility will help all our borrowing customers to route GST payments through our Bank, it will further improve CASA & float. Our Bank is working towards offering a "one-stop" digital solution for all the statutory payments to customers and also to the general public, thereby contributing to digitisation of Govt. Payments". Mr. Sekhar Rao, Executive Director & other top executives of the Bank were present on the occasion.

CENTRAL BANK OF INDIA ORGANISES CLEANLINESS ACTIVITIES 'SWACHHATA HI SEVA CAMPAIGN (SHS)

In terms of Government of India, Ministry of Finance, Department of Financial Services letter no. 44 dtd. 29/09/2023. Central Bank of India on 1st October 2023 cleanliness activities 'SWACHHATA HI SEVA CAMPAIGN (SHS) conducted at nearby area of zonal office premises campus, Bank Street, Koti, Hyderabad (photographs are attached herewith). The following Executives are participated Shri DHARASING NAIK K, Zonal Head/General Manager, Shri Satish N Talreja, Dy. Zonal Head, Shri Vivek Kumar Srivastava, Regional Head, Hyderabad and Smt Ch Satyavani, Asst. General Manager and other executives of Zonal Office, and Regional Office, Hyderabad.



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