

## Sprouts BRAND STORY

# FAMGA

# FLOATS 57 INDIAN STARTUPS

## NUMBER OF START-UPS FUNDED BY FAMGA



Year	Facebook	Amazon	Microsoft	Google	Apple	FAMGA Total
2019	2	4	9	6	-	21
2020	2	10	8	11	1	32
2021*	3	12	12	29	1	57

\* As on Nov 19, 2021  
Source: Tracxn

While world-wide there is a conflict of interests situation playing out between retail chain outlets and on-line platforms, India is witnessing a slew of startups from global giants that intend to operate symbiotically with business outlets that have physical presence.

**UNMESH GUJARATHI**  
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Business community in India's financial hub, Mumbai is witnessing a very lop-sided form of growth, when it comes to investments being made in startup firms by American majors. The funders comprise Facebook, Amazon, Microsoft, Google and Apple. These five firms under the umbrella of their self-generated acronym, FAMGA have in the current year alone invested in 57 startups. The data that has been made available by Tracxn indicates that investments made by the FAGMA firms in the

current year have far surpassed the pre-Covid levels of investment.

Studying FAGMA's investment data in India for three consecutive years, it becomes clear that there is a continuous and steep upward spiral. In the year 2019 FAGMA had invested in 21 startups from India. In the subsequent year the corresponding figure shot up to 32 and in the current year it stands at 57.

A study of the current year's peaking investments revealed that Google has topped the charts by funding 29 startups. Software giant Microsoft and online platform Amazon shared a distinct second spot, each investing in 12 startups.

Financial experts observed that the startup investments are spread across different sectors, thereby catering to diverse portfo-

lios that include local delivery, e-commerce web portals besides accommodating the relatively new market entrant, namely fintech platforms like Bitcoin.

The type of Indian start-ups funded by FAMGA this year mirrors the global trend — they are spread across different sectors ranging from hyper-local delivery to e-commerce websites to marketplaces to fintech platforms.

To cite a few, Dunzo is a startup catering to home delivery in multiple product categories. Meesho, a startup venture catering to marketing needs including that of resellers too promotes sale of a diverse variety of products. Under a similar category of facilitation, is DotPe that deals with online ordering and end-to-end solutions for restaurants and their remote clients.

The financial observers concluded that this trend is likely to continue in the next few years too with Google making an announcement about its intentions to double their workforce in India.

► **Online startups investments peak in India**

► **Fintechs to find medium on the Web space**

► **Startups to aid retail outlets symbiotically**

## Amid prediction of heavy rain, yellow alert issued in Mumbai

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Living up to the yellow alert given by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) for Mumbai and surrounding districts, Wednesday looked just like a day from the Monsoon season. In the last 24 hours, Mumbai's Santacruz and Colaba observatories have

recorded rainfall of 0.6- and 1.2-mm respectively and the rain is expected to continue throughout the day.

The yellow alert was issued by IMD because of a low-pressure area formation over east central Arabian Sea off Maharashtra coast. The rainfall is likely to continue on Thursday too as per the IMD Forecast.

## Directorate General of Civil Aviation postpones resumption of international flights indefinitely

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The government on Wednesday cited concerns over the Omicron variant of the COVID-19 virus and indefinitely postponed full international

flights' reopening, which was scheduled on December 15.

This means international flights will continue to operate on a smaller scale and only with 31 countries with which India has air bubble agreements.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said, "In view of the evolving global scenario with the emergence of new variant of concern, the situation is being watched closely in consultation with all the stakeholders and an appropriate decision indicating the effective date of resumption of scheduled commercial international passenger services shall be notified in due course."



## Sprouts CARTOON OF THE DAY



## BMC puts off reopening of schools for Std I-VII

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In a major setback for parents waiting to send their children in Stds I-VII back to school, the BMC on Tuesday postponed the reopening until December 15. Civic officials said the decision was taken to ensure appropriate measures are taken for the safe return of students on the campus, amid the fear of a new Coronavirus variant. Many schools were to welcome back primary kids today.

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation's (BMC) decision comes a day after the state government issued a



GR (Government Resolution) clarifying the standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the reopening from Wednesday.

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## 78 crores recovered from those without masks and Rs 94 lakhs from those who spit on the streets

JYOTI DUBEY | SPROUTS

The second wave of corona has been completely controlled in Mumbai, but the threat of the new corona variant Omikron has created fear all over the world. However, the number of people who were fearless from Corona has increased in Mumbai. Not only this, the number of people spitting on the streets and roaming without masks has also increased. The Municipal Corporation is taking action against 222 people walking without masks every day. According to the data received, since April 2020 till now, action has been taken against 3965261 people and a fine of Rs 788193600 has been recovered from them. At the same time, taking action against 46,998 people since September 2020, a fine of Rs 93,88,300 has been collected.

It is noteworthy that in the month of March last year, there was a corona epidemic in Mumbai. After this, the use of masks in public places has been made mandatory to protect against



corona. Although many people are ignoring it. This negligence can play an important role in increasing the spread of corona. At the same time, in view of its seriousness, the Municipal Corporation started cracking down on those who walk without masks in public places. With the help of clean-up marshals and police, a fine of Rs 200 is being imposed on people walking without masks. Similarly, a fine of Rs 200 is also being charged from those who spit on the roads. The Municipal Administration has appealed to the

people to follow the rules of wearing masks and not spitting in public places to protect against corona and other epidemics.

Most of the people caught spitting on the streets in Zone 'A' Action has been taken against most of the people spitting on the streets in Fort, Colaba, Sandhurst Road, Marine Lines, Nariman Point, Mumbai Central, Grant Road, Byculla falling in Zone A of the Municipal Corporation. According to the information, action has been taken against a total of 93 lakh 88 thousand people.

## MAHARASHTRA MAKES NEGATIVE RT-PCR REPORT COMPULSORY FOR DOMESTIC FLIERS

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In view of the emergence of the highly mutated Covid-19 variant Omicron, the Maharashtra government has made a negative RT-PCR test within 72 hours of departure a must for all domestic passengers.

"In case of domestic air travel, passengers travelling within the state will either have to be fully vaccinated or compulsorily carry an RT-PCR test within 48 hours of the time of arrival...In the case of passengers from other states, negative RTPCR will be compulsory without exceptions," an order released by the state government said.

Meanwhile, India may not resume commercial International flights from December 15, as announced earlier. The decision has been taken keeping "in view of the evolving global scenario with the emergence of new variants of concern".



Globally, the United States is moving to require that all air travellers entering the country show a negative Covid-19 test performed within one day of departure. Saudi Arabia, too, confirmed its first case of the Omicron Covid-19 variant coming from a north African country. Japan also joined Israel and Morocco in saying it would completely close its borders. Earlier this week, the World

Health Organization (WHO) warned on Monday that the heavily mutated Omicron coronavirus variant was likely to spread internationally and poses a very high risk of infection surges that could have "severe consequences" in some places.

On Tuesday, health officials in the Netherlands said the heavily mutated new coronavirus variant was in Europe several days earlier than previously known.

## Bank of Baroda flags-off 'Green Ride Ek Pehal Swachh Hawa ki Aur'



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Bank of Baroda today announced the launch of 'Green Ride - Ek Pehal Swachh Hawa ki Aur' initiative with super-model and fitness enthusiast, Milind Soman; powered by GAIL India. Under this initiative, Milind Soman will embark on a 10-day long journey by riding a bicycle and driving an eco-friendly electric vehicle mapping through Gujarat, Rajasthan and Haryana before reaching Delhi.

The Green Ride is being organized to spread awareness on importance of cleaner air and encourage people to adopt sustainable modes of transport. It will be flagged off from Mumbai on December 3, and conclude at Delhi on December 13, 2021. Enroute, Soman will visit Bank of Baroda branches at Godhra, Baroda, Udaipur and Jaipur.

During his tour Soman will interact with Bank's employees and his fans to educate them about his user experience of bob World app for all his travel booking and shopping needs on-the-go. He would also highlight the importance of sustainable living such as the use of energy efficient transportation to ensure clean air

for all living beings.

Sanjiv Chadha, MD & CEO, Bank of Baroda said, "Sustainability is key to a strong nation and Bank of Baroda strongly supports the ideologies of a sustainable living and safeguarding the environment. Our association with 'Green Ride - Ek Pehal Swachh Hawa ki Aur' initiative spearheaded by India's most popular fitness enthusiast, Milind Soman, is an effort to promote awareness and call for action among young Indians resulting in broader social impact."

Milind Soman said, "The Green Ride is an effort to promote healthier modes of transportation. It is an ode to the air that we breathe, every living moment of our lives. It is my attempt to make us all more aware and conscious of the ill-effects of air that is polluted by our own actions. I hope this initiative makes people stop to think each time they pick up their car keys to drive small distances, or switch on gensets during power-failures, or burst crackers at celebrations. We all want progress and development. But not at the cost of depriving future generations of the beautiful world we have known. Let us celebrate our many technological achievements. Let us celebrate progress and development.

Sprouts CARTOON OF THE DAY

## The Great Indian Travel EMPOWER, MEET, EXPLORE

JYOTI DUBEY | SPROUTS

The Great Indian Travel was flagged off by the hands of MLA Prashant Thakur at Kendriya Vihar, Kharghar. The Great Indian Travel - Empower | Meet | Explore is a 101 days road trip campaign to Support Small and micro Businesses affected by COVID-19, in all Indian States and Union Territories, explore India and its Culture, Traditions, Customs, Cuisines, etc. initiated by a married couple Kaustav Ghosh and Laxmi Sorte.

The team behind the campaign Kaustav Ghosh - Founder, Laxmi



Sorte - Co- Founder, Arya Nair - Public Relations and Marketing, Bhavik Deshmukh - Navigator, Anit Kaur Banga - Ideator, Research and Development, Ritanshu Sharma - Meeting Coordinator, Sawrab Samata - Website Developer, Tarun

Mishra - Graphic Designer/ Video Maker, Shashi Mudgal - Strategist, Abhishek Walekar - Vehicle Branding, Sheetal Sirsikar - Vehicle Branding.

The Great Indian Travel will traverse 15,000+ kms, covering all

states of the country starting 1st December, 2021 till 11th March, 2022. During our Road Trip we will be meeting like minded people from various International Organisations like Rotary Clubs, Rotaract Clubs, Inner Wheel Clubs, BNI Chapters.

We the aim to empower people from all backgrounds and establish a network for them to promote and grow their businesses with the help of #ISupportYourBusiness. The cause of our Campaign is to support the small businesses and make their brands and efforts recognised. We are here to support and strengthen the local economy.

## RAMAKANT MUNDE HONORED WITH 'MAHARASHTRA RATNA PRESTIGIOUS AWARD 2021

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Ramakant Munde (Bollywood Photographer) was awarded the Maharashtra Ratna Prestigious Award 2021 at the Rangsharda Natya Auditorium in Bandra, Mumbai today by Aap Ki Awaz Foundation. Ali Khan, Dilip Sen, Aarti Nagpal, Soundarya Garg, Poonam Zanwar, Manav Sohal, Shravan Goswami, Arshin Mehta, Raka, Sunil Pal, Divya Dutta, Munna Dubey, Hiteswar, Tina Ghai, MP Mishra, Dipu Srivastava were also honored.

Anjan Goswami has been conducting this award show in Mumbai continuously for 12 years. Poor boys and girls are married off on behalf of Anjan Goswami of Aap Ki Awaz Foundation and note books are distributed to about 20,000 children in each shawl and poor people are treated for free by setting up medical camps at different places.



**MSRTC strike, nearly 20,000 staffers resume work**



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The MSRTC strike has split the workforce with nearly 20,000 joining back, thousands suspended, and buses stoned and damaged by staffers. "The MSRTC operated 1,086 buses, including 822 ordinary ones, on various routes from 50 depots till Monday evening. On Tuesday evening, the number reached 960," a spokesperson of the MSRTC said. Till Monday, the corporation had suspended the services of 7,585 permanent employees and 1,779 daily wage workers, an official said.

**AAP MUMBAI BESTOWS GOLD MEDALS ON MAYOR KISHORI PEDNEKAR, FOR SUCCESSFULLY OVERSEEING THE DESTRUCTION OF MUMBAI'S CIVIC INFRASTRUCTURE**

SPROUTS | NEWS NETWORK

The Aam Aadmi Party today, bestowed gold medals on Mayor Kishori Pednekar, for her phenomenal work as Mumbai's first citizen - overseeing the destruction of city's civic infrastructure and making the citizens' lives more miserable than ever before. As a part of the campaign called #GoldMedalForMayor, AAP Mumbai Ward Presidents placed stickers with the caption 'Gold Medal for Mayor' across the suburbs, at locations which demonstrate how successful our Mayor and the Shiv Sena have been - at being incompetent, unaccountable, and unwilling to address the civic issues that plague our city. The AAP Mumbai campaign, which witnessed over 200 stickers being placed at various locations

in North Mumbai, targeted civic issues which adversely affect the quality of our daily lives - countless potholes, excessive pipeline leakages, open manholes & drains, scattered garbage, broken footpaths, dilapidated vehicles on roads, and many more - representing the BMC's abysmal failure to fulfill its responsibilities as Mumbai's civic body. The objective of the campaign was to garner public attention to the inability, and as some might argue, the refusal of our Mayor & the Shiv Sena to make Mumbai cleaner, safer and more liveable for the Aam Aadmi. "Despite being in power in the BMC for the past 30 years, the Shiv Sena has remained incapable of improving Mumbai's public toilets, road networks, drainage infrastructure, & solid waste management systems; and turned a blind eye towards the provision



of essential public services like healthcare and education. In spite of being the richest civic body in India - with an annual budget of over 39,000 Crores, the BMC has silently watched, while Mumbaikars have continued to struggle due to the ineptitude and



callousness of our representatives." said Gopal Jhaveri, AAP Mumbai leader. "Corruption in the BMC is at an all-time high, and performance is at an all-time low. Kishori Pednekar deserves a gold medal for being the worst performing Mayor of

Mumbai by far. It is our appeal that Mumbaikars choose their elected representatives, keeping in mind the incompetence and apathy that we have all been witness to, for the past 30 years." said Preeti Sharma Menon, AAP National Executive Member & Mumbai Prabhari.

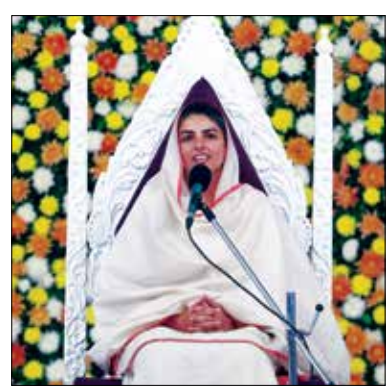
**NEED OF SPIRITUALLY ENLIGHTENED SAINTS TO BRING SEMBLANCE TO THE SOCIETY**



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Spiritually enlightened saints who tread the divine journey devotedly with firm faith and in a state of bliss provide semblance to the society are the need of the hour" was the clarion call given by Satguru Mata Sudiksha Ji Maharaj on the concluding day 29th November 2021 of the 74th Nirankari sant samagam. The Samagam was held virtually at the Spiritual Complex at Samalkha, Haryana and simulcasted on the Mission's website and Sadhana TV Channel. Her Holiness implored that the Divine journey can be effectively undertaken by staying connected to the Almighty, Formless Nirankar and strengthening it through Satsang, Sewa and Simran. Staying

connected ensures against any infirmity shaking our Faith.' Adding another dimension to the Samagam was a Multilingual poetic symposium with a motivational subject - 'Shradha, Bhakti, Vishwas Rahe, Mann Mein Anand Ka Vaas Rahe', which saw a participation of several poets who showcased their works in Hindi, Punjabi, Multani, Haryanvi, and English. A Souvenir, based on the theme of the Samagam featuring various articles and scripts in Hindi, Punjabi and English languages was released on 25th November 2021, two days before the Samagam, by Satguru Mata Sudiksha Ji Maharaj. **Nirankari Exhibition** The virtual Nirankari exhibition was broadcasted on Mission's website, which depicted the History and



ideology of the Mission using rare photos and models; spiritual tours undertaken by the Satguru to spread the message of the Mission, Bal Pradarshini was exhibited alongside. Through various skits the theme was presented. **Langar** : Community Kitchen, Canteen and proper food arrangements were made for the organizers and the participants.

**Dhabbuji was the star attraction in Chitranagari meeting.**



DEENDAYAL MURARKD | SPROUTS

Abid Surti, a story writer, painter, and cartoonist, was a special guest at the meeting of Chitranagari Sanwad Manch at Goregaon (E). Abid Surti was very popular for his cartoon work in Dharmayug hindi magazine. He has written more than 80 novels and other books. Through his NGO Drop-dead Foundation he has set a precedent for water conservation in our society. In the KBC program, Mega star Amitabh Bachchan had highlighted his charity & social work. In the meeting Abid ji presented the notion of his Indrajal Comics hero 'Bahadur' in a very interesting way. Abid Surti is a fantastic writer who has carved out a niche for himself through the use of pen

and brush. Famous Showman Raj Kapoor wanted to make a film on one of his stories 'Daud'. But due to the sudden death of kapur saheb, it did not materialize. Abid grew up in the Dongri neighbourhood of South Mumbai. He used to sleep on the footpath in his early days of his life. Some of his friends were also like this, and they went on to become very powerful mafia and dons. In his autobiographical novel Sufi, he gives a fascinating description of these incidents. The meeting was nicely conducted by lyricist Devmani Pandey. It was attended by Devyani Joshi, Naveen Joshi, Deendayal murarka, Moin Ahmed Dehlvi, Atul Kumar V, Ravindra Yadav, Bhartendu Vimal, K P Saxena, Sanjeev Nigam, Pradeep Gupta, Anil Gaur, Rajesh Bhatt, Dinesh Dubey, and many other dignitaries.

**STERLITE POWER'S 'URJA MARG' FOR UNINTERRUPTED SUPPLY TO MUMBAI**

JYOTI DUBEY | SPROUTS

Sterlite Power has tightened its belt to ensure uninterrupted power supply to Mumbai, Thane and Navi Mumbai. Accordingly, it has been decided to lay a 400 KV double circuit high voltage power line of 70 km length from Central Power Grid Power Station at Padgha to Mahatrans Power Substation at Kharghar under 'Mumbai Urja Marg'. The work of this power line will be completed by the end of 2023. Therefore, it will be possible to carry more than 1000 MW of electricity to Mumbai

from all over the country including Maharashtra. Mumbai's current maximum demand for electricity is 3500 MW and it is increasing day by day. The demand for electricity in Thane and Navi Mumbai is also increasing rapidly. Also in October 2020, due to technical failure in the grid, blackout had taken place in many parts of Mumbai, Thane and Navi Mumbai. The Union Energy Department along with the state government has taken it seriously. While the state government has expedited the work of Kharghar Vikhroli 400 KV double circuit power line, now the 400 KV power

line will be brought from the 765 KV substation of Central Power Grid at Padgha to the 400 KV substation of Mahapreshan at Kharghar. Therefore, electricity from all over the country will easily reach Kharghar power substation and from there it will be easy to reach Mumbai through Kharghar Vikhroli high voltage power line. Ninad Pitale, project director of the company, said that the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) has commissioned Sterlite Power to construct high voltage power lines at Padgha Kharghar, Padgha Navi Mumbai and Apta-Kalwa.



SPROUTS | 5th Anniversary of Sambhaji Brigade state level convention held at Rang Sharda Hall, opening done by ST workers and Farmers of Maharashtra by lighting a torch in Mumbai. Pic : Vijay Gohil

**95 per cent of people infected with HIV in Mumbai taking treatment**

SPROUTS | NEWS NETWORK

About 95 per cent of city residents infected by HIV are aware of their disease status and living with it with treatment, says a survey carried out ahead of World AIDS Day, which is observed on December 1. The study was conducted by the Mumbai District AIDS Control Society (MDACS).



SPROUTS | Retired Ceremony of Prakash Keshav Nibde, Deputy Engineer Leak Investigation H West Water Works Department for last 30 years. On this occasion Sachin Khambal, deputy engineer, Vijay Keluskar (Fitter), Ganesh Bhosale, Vilas Dinkar, Suresh Chaudhary, Arvind Manjrekar, Laxman Kamble, Ramesh Shinde, Jayesh Chavan, Bandu Kondigire, Sagar Salunkhe, assistant engineer, Water Works Department, working class and officers were present. Pic : Sushant Patil

## GST COLLECTION CROSSES RS 1.30 LAKH CR FOR SECOND STRAIGHT MONTH IN NOVEMBER: FINMIN

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As per the Ministry of Finance, India's GST collection rose to Rs 1,31,526 crore in November. This was the second straight month when the gross GST collection crossed Rs 1.30 lakh crore, on both sequential and year-on-year basis, news agency IANS reported.

Besides, the GST revenue for November 2021 registered a 25 per cent growth compared to the corresponding period last year.



Out of the total gross collection, 23,978 crore and the share of SGST the total share of CGST's was Rs 31,127 crore.

The share of IGST stood at Rs 66,815 crore and Cess was at Rs 9,606 crore.

"The GST revenues for November 2021 have been the second highest ever since the introduction of GST, second only to that in April 2021, which related to year-end revenues and higher than last month's collection, which also included the impact of returns required to be filed quarterly. This is very much in line with the trend in economic recovery," the finance ministry said.

## Commercial LPG gas cylinder price hiked by Rs 100: Check latest rate in your city



SPROUTS | NEWS NETWORK

LPG prices for commercial cylinders were on Wednesday hiked by 100 per cylinder. Earlier prices of commercial LPG were hiked on November 1.

According to a report by Zee News, the increased price of LPG cylinders is effective from today.

The national oil marketing companies have increased the price of commercial 19kg LPG cylinder by Rs 100.50, taking the new price to Rs 2,101 in Delhi. While, in Mumbai it will cost Rs 2,051 per cylinder. In Kolkata and Chennai it will cost Rs 2,174.50 and Rs 2,234.50 per cylinder respectively.

This is the second-highest price

of 19kg commercial cylinder after 2012-13 when it used to cost around Rs 2,200 per cylinder. However, there is no increase in prices of other domestic cylinders weighing 14.2kg, 5 kg, 10kg composite or 5kg composite cylinders.

LPG Cylinder Rate is revised monthly for all over the States and Union Territories in India.

Earlier on November 1, prices of commercial 19kg LPG cylinder has seen a steep rise of Rs 266, increasing the prices to Rs 2,000.50. On October 1, prices of 19kg commercial cylinders were increased by Rs 43 and decreased by Rs 2.50 on October 6. On September 1, the prices of these cylinders were increased by Rs 75.

## Bajaj Auto reports 10% decline in November sales



SPROUTS | NEWS NETWORK

Bajaj Auto on Wednesday reported a 10 per cent decline in its total wholesales at 3,79,276 units in November 2021. The company had dispatched 4,22,240 units in the same month a year ago.

Domestic sales last month fell 20 per cent to 1,58,755 units against 1,98,933 units in November last year, Bajaj Auto said in a statement. The total two-wheeler sales slipped 12 per cent to 3,38,473 units compared to 3,84,993 units sold in the year-ago period. However, the total commercial vehicle sales increased by 10 per cent to 40,803 units from 37,247 units in the same month last year, the company said. The total exports last month, however, witnessed a marginal decline of 1 per cent to 2,20,521 units against 2,23,307 units sold in the corresponding month last year.

## RBI APPOINTS COMMITTEE TO ADVISE RELIANCE CAPITAL ADMINISTRATOR

SPROUTS | NEWS NETWORK

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Tuesday moved quickly towards the process of finding a resolution for Reliance Capital Ltd (RCL) whose board was superseded on Monday. The regulator appointed a committee to advise the administrator of the non-bank lender.

The RBI is shortly expected to move the Mumbai bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) to initiate the corporate insolvency resolution process (CIRP) against RCL. In October, the RBI had filed an application with the Calcutta bench of the NCLT within four days of superseding the board of Srei Infrastructure Finance and Srei Equipment Finance.

In a statement, the central bank said that it has set up a three-member advisory panel to assist the administrator - Nageswara Rao Y, the former executive director at Bank of Maharashtra.

The committee includes Sanjeev Nautiyal, the former deputy managing director of the State Bank of India and Srinivasan Varadarajan, ex deputy managing



director of Axis Bank. The third member is Praveen P Kadle, the former managing director and CEO, Tata Capital Ltd.

After the RBI had superseded the board of RCL, the company had said that it will fully co-operate with the administrator for the expeditious resolution of its debt. Meanwhile, Anil Ambani has reportedly resigned from Reliance General Insurance as the non-executive director. Shares of RCL were locked in at the lower circuit of Rs 18.10 — a drop of almost 5 per cent over its last close.

It is feared that public

shareholders who hold more than 97 per cent of RCL will be the worst hit. Of these, while retail shareholders hold around 57.53 per cent, high net worth individuals with more than Rs 2 lakh of shares have 27.42 per cent. The rest is spread among insurance companies (that includes LIC with 2.98 per cent), foreign portfolio investors and Ramakrishna Reddy Chinta among others. The focus has now turned to whether RCL will be sold as a single entity, including the holding of its subsidiaries, or whether some of its key businesses will be sold separately.

## DESPITE CENTRE'S VAT CUT ON PETROL, DIESEL

SPROUTS | NEWS NETWORK

After the Centre's tax reduction on petrol and diesel by Rs 5 and Rs 10 on November 3, respectively, the Delhi government on Wednesday have also reduced the VAT on petrol from 30 per cent to 19.40 per cent, thereby, reducing petrol rated by Rs 8 per litre.

The new rates will come into

effect from midnight today, media reports said. Domestic prices of both petrol and diesel have touched record highs driven by a sharp rise in crude oil rates. Petrol prices has already crossed the Rs 100 per litre mark and above in several states.

A few of the opposition-led states, however, had not cut VAT and had demanded further reduction in central excise duty.

# SOWING THE SEEDS OF... WISDOM

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# LORD DATTATREYA STORY

Dattatreya, or Sri Datta, as he is also referred to, is a Hindu deity who is also regarded as an aspect of the Divine Trinity or Trimurti of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara. The name "Dattatreya" is derived from two Sanskrit words, Datta (which means "given") and Atreya (which refers to the sage Atri, who was also Datta's biological father).

In the Nath tradition of Hinduism, Dattatreya is considered to be an avatar or reincarnation of Lord Shiva and is revered as the Adi-Guru or the First Teacher of the Adinath Sampradaya of the Nath sect of followers. Dattatreya first emerged as a teacher of Yoga, with clear Tantric traits. But later, he was accepted and absorbed into many other cults and sects, even including the more conventional Vaishnavism. He is also considered more of a God today, than a teacher. Today, this deity is worshiped by a multitude of Hindus from all walks of life, spanning the entire globe.

Data is believed to be the author of the Tripura Rahasya, a treatise on Advaita Vedanta, which was given to Parashurama. Lord Dattatreya's birthday is celebrated in a big way as Dattatreya Jayanti.

Dattatreya is regarded as one of the most ancient deities. The earliest references to him can be found as far back as in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. The Dattatreya Upanishad, which is part of the Atharva Veda, describes him as variously taking the form of a child, a madman and even a demon, in order to help his followers attain moksha (liberation) from the material world.

In the earliest Tantric traditions, this deity was portrayed with only one head. Gorakshanath was responsible for including Sri Datta in the Nath Sampradaya and giving the deity a socially acceptable form today. The current three-headed form of Guru Sri Datta was probably introduced in the last 900 years or so.

## Lord Dattatreya's Childhood

Young Datta left his home at a very tender age, to roam naked in search of the Absolute One. He wandered around Gujarat, Maharashtra, North Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. He is believed to have attained enlightenment in a town in Karnataka, known as Ganagapura. It is also said that his original footprints can still be seen in a lonely peak at Girnar.

Even the treatise Tripura Rahasya refers to Parashurama finding Dattatreya meditating on a peak on the Gandha Madana Mountain.



**Dattatreya as an Avatar of the Trinity**

Three of Dattatreya's closest disciples were kings. While one of them was an Asura, the others belonged to the Kshatriya (warrior) clan. Dattatreya was at first regarded as an avatar of Shiva. But later, Vaishnavites claimed that he was an avatar of Vishnu. But many Hindus regard both Shiva and Vishnu's as two aspects of the Absolute Brahman. Hence, he went on to identify with the Trinity themselves.

Interestingly, the Dattatreya Upanishad first introduces him as being one with Vishnu and ends with the mantra, "Om Namah Shivaya", thereby also identifying him with Shiva. Towards the end of the third chapter, it says that Shiva pervades all reality and resides as the Eternal Jyoti (Divine Light) in the heart of every man. Shiva is described here as being omnipresent and omniscient. Finally, the chapter closes with the description of

Shiva as of being that of Dattatreya.

In the Dasham Granth, Guru Gobind Singh describes Dattatreya (Datt Muni/ Datt Dev) as being the incarnation of Rudra, the Supreme Power. This treatise also narrates the entire life story of Datta.

## Appearance of Dattatreya

Shri Dattatreya is portrayed in different ways in different traditions among the Hindus. However, the most commonly portrayed image as having six hands; the lowest two hands holding a Mala (garland) and a Kamandalu (water pot). The middle two hands are shown holding the sacred Shankha (Conch) and Chakra (Discus). Occasionally, portraits also show him holding the Gada (Mace). He is also shown as accompanied by 4 dogs and a cow.

## Significance of the Form of Lord Dattatreya

Dattatreya is shown having 3 heads and a form that resonates peace and serenity. In the present Kali Yuga, it is only through pure, divine love, that one can go beyond just being poised and actually attain that type of calmness and serenity. Only those extremely Dharmic (righteous) can follow the fourfold path of Yoga and go ahead to discover the Absolute Truth. Guru Datta radiates that very love and compassion, thereby emanating that peace and love from his person.

The 3 heads of Shri Guru Datta are said to embody his identity as the Devas of the Trinity, namely, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. He is also the one who has transcended the 3 qualities or the Triguna and is one with the Sublime Energy of the Absolute Guru. This is why he is also regarded as the Teacher or the Divine Guru.

## Sri Dattatreya's 6 Hands

Dattatreya is most often shown as having 6 hands, each holding the Shankha, the Chakra, the Gada, the Trishul (Trident), the Kamandalu (water pot) and the Begging Bowl. Mentioned below is the significance of each of these items:

## The Shankha

The Shankha or the Conch is the one that resonates with the Naada, the divine sound. "Sam" and "Kham" together stand for Jupiter and Saturn. Saturn stands forms the basis of knowledge spiritual expansion, which is ultimately bestowed by Jupiter. Likewise, the teacher too is responsible to first awaken the need for gaining knowledge in the student and then helping him or her seek extensive training to achieve the same.

## The Chakra

The Chakra, the Discus or the Wheel stands for time or the Kalachakra. The teacher presides over this factor too, by training the student to gain knowledge regarding the time factor, also teaching him to adapt equally to both good and bad times in his life, without getting affected by either. Developing a sense of timelessness leads the follower to Ananda or bliss.

## The Gada

The Gada or the Mace is symbolic of pride. Pride has to be sacrificed in order to walk the path of the Truth. Dattatreya leads his followers with love and compassion, gently nudging them when they err from the path of Dharma, reminding them to put down their pride and develop love and compassion for other being, thereby experiencing spiritual enlightenment.

The Mace also symbolizes the inverted form of the cerebro-spinal system in our bodies. Guru Datta holding the mace indicates him reversing human conditioning, to free the devotee of his ignorance, finally leading him toward enlightenment.

## The Trishul

The Trishul or the Trident symbolizes the triple energies of Ida, Pingala and Sushumna, which are contained in a subtle form within the Brahmadanda. The Ida at the left, gives right to materialization; the Pingala at the right, to spirituality; and the Yogic Sushumna, being the central energy current, works to balance out both these right and left energies. Datta holding the Trident, represents the promise he makes to his followers, to balance out their energies in a way that helps them lead the best life possible, in terms of material pleasure as well as spirituality.

## The Kamandalu

The Kamandalu or the little water pot indicates that Guru Datta is, in fact, the life carrier. He bestows a good and long life on the student, so that it can aid him in his spiritual journey; his journey along the Path of the Truth. The Master breathes this life-force into his student, thereby helping him perform his daily Yogic practices, finally raising his Kundalini and giving him the moksha that he seeks.

## The Begging Bowl

Finally, the begging bowl that Datta holds; signifies that he begs followers to donate their ego, limitations, pride, negativity, evil thoughts and sickness to him, thereby enabling them to be free of the same. Guru Dattatreya then drinks down this "poison" and helps his bhaktas be liberated from all forms of negativity and evil, thereby putting them more firmly on the path toward enlightenment. Incidentally, Lord Shiva is also sometimes portrayed to be carrying a begging bowl for the same reason.

## Avadhuta Gita

According to the Nath Sampradaya, the Avadhuta Gita is a work compiled from the words uttered by Dattatreya, which had been transcribed by his two disciples, Swami and Kartika. Even greats like Swami Vivekananda are said to have held this book in high esteem.

Some of the ideas in this treatise is similar to Shaivite philosophy, Vaishnavite Agamas and Buddhist Tantra as well.

## SproutsSPIRITUALITY

### SHODASHOPACHAR PUJA

#### WHY SHOULD AKSHATA NOT BE OFFERED TO A CONCH ?

The conch in a puja has been given the position of the indestructible Brahman. One whose sound symbolises all-encompassing characteristics and is a consequential symbol of pervasiveness, the conch has been honoured by giving it the position of Shiva in the form of Brahman. The conch, which itself is a symbol of activity of supplication, meaning, it is in an awakened state, needs no awakening through the sagun□ all-encom-

passing medium of the akshata. That is why, during puja, akshata are not offered to a conch.

#### While performing puja of a conch why should it be filled with water ?

The dormant sound waves situated in the void of the conch acquire a flowing nature and obtain momentum due to the contact with the Apa-tattva (Absolute Water Principle)-predominant waves in the water. Thus, they

become capable of functioning independently at the sagun level. Puja of the conch (that is filled with water) increases the emission capability of the Chaitanya-predominant marak (Destroyer) waves emitting from the conch, and this leads to purification of the premises. It helps the worshipper derive maximum benefit of the Chaitanya emitting from the puja.

- Sanatan Sanstha



The most valuable thing in life is life itself, but mankind is likely to make the mistake of imagining that the value of life can be enhanced by accretions from outside. What we call life is a completeness by itself, and it does not stand in need of any attribute or adjective to make it complete. The fact that life is a mysterious wholeness and the idea that it needs additional requirements to make it more complete is an error that comes to high relief with a carefully conducted analysis of our own nature.

We do not stand in need of anything to make us complete. This is a truth that we usually forget. And as a matter of fact, nothing can make us complete by a mathematical addition of quantitative or magnitudinous operations. Any amount of addition of material possession or quantity of any kind cannot make us complete,

because our existence is inseparable from the principle of life.

The life that we are living or leading is an inscrutable something which is identical with what we are. On ultimate analysis, we come to know that life is not a process of acting, doing or functioning, but something identical with our own essential being. Inasmuch as life and our existence seem to be inseparable, living a successful life would mean living in such a way as to be in consonance with the characteristics of our own nature. There can be nothing more difficult in life than to live life itself. It is easier to achieve feats which will evoke public approbation than to merely live life, because of the fact that it is identical with our own self. To conduct oneself is more difficult than to conduct a huge army in the battlefield. We can order the march of a huge garrison in the field of battle, but we cannot order a proper

## TRUE KNOWLEDGE

movement of our own personalities in the field of life itself.

The reason behind this difficulty is that our activities, when they are directed to our own selves, become inseparable from our own selves. We are used to regarding life as something other than ourselves. We are accustomed to regarding the world as something different from ourselves, to clinch the whole matter. We are habituated to thinking that activity of life and our personal existence are two different things, so one can afford to be something inside, and another thing in public activity. What a pity!

It has been wrongly assumed by people, by almost everyone in the world, that activity, function, or

an office in which one is working has nothing to do with one's own existence or being. This is the reason why we imagine that it is possible for us to behave in a particular way in outer life, inconsistent with what we are in our own inner life. Most people in the world are schizophrenics in the metaphysical sense because they have a double life. It is rare that we find a person who has a single life to live. Everyone has a twofold life—one public life, another private life. This is the malady of life. The greatest disease conceivable is what is called psychological schizophrenia—a split personality, as they call it in psychoanalysis. It is when a mind assumes two properties,

two artificial individualities, and conducts itself in a twofold manner, as if it is two different things altogether; and this malady has managed to infect the lives of people by affecting the very function of the understanding itself.

The greatest endowment of the human being is rationality. We have no property more precious than the power of understanding, logical decision and the ratiocinating capacity. But if the disease sits in that passage, then our thought itself would be diseased. This means to say that when the fundamental instrument of knowledge—which is the basic faculty of all human operations in life—gets affected by a disease, the existence of the disease itself cannot be detected. When a defect gets identified with the nature of our consciousness, it becomes part of ourselves; therefore, we cannot discover the existence of this defect. We cannot

know where the mistake lies in our own nature because of the fact that this mistake has become a part of our existence and consciousness.

Observation of the existence and characteristic of this defect of our personality is impossible because it is not an object of our observation; it is our own selves. We are used to empirical observations, examination through a telescope or a microscope in a laboratory, of objects which are other than our own selves, and we have never been taught how we can observe our own selves through a novel type of telescope or microscope. How can anyone know what mistake is involved in one's own life when that mistake has become a part of one's own nature—when it has become inseparable from one's own skin? This is the crucial question of life and unless this problem is solved, no other problem in the world can be solved.

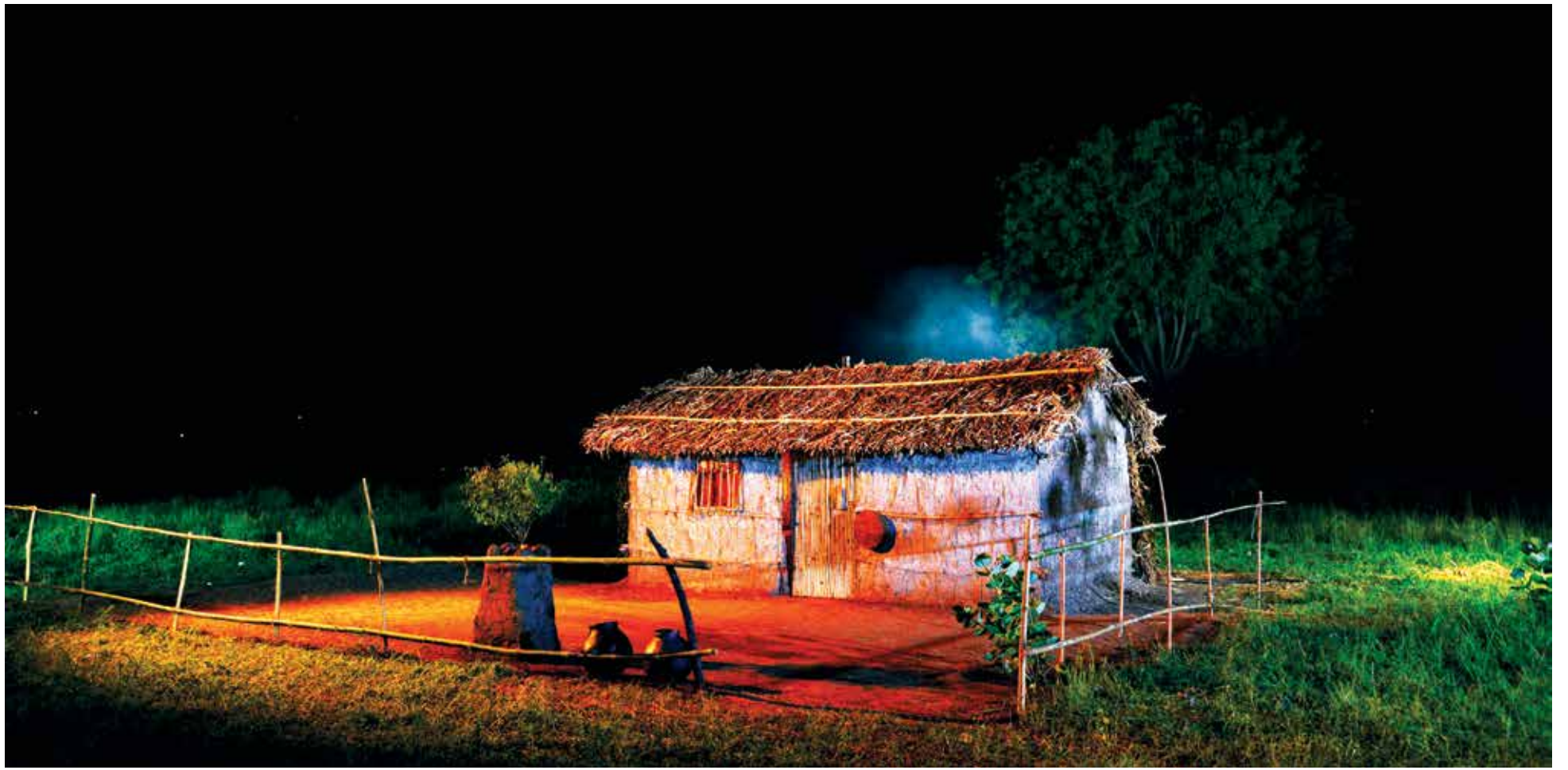
## Admiral Hari Kumar takes charge as new Navy chief



SPROUTS | NEWS NETWORK

Admiral R. Hari Kumar on Tuesday took over as the new Indian Navy chief from the outgoing chief, Admiral Karambir Singh, who retired after a career spanning over 41 years in service.

"It is a matter of great honour for me to take charge as the navy chief. The Indian Navy's focus is on our national maritime interests and challenges," Admiral Kumar said after reviewing a guard of honour on the South Block lawns. Admiral Kumar was the western naval commander before taking over as the country's 25th chief of naval staff. He is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy and was commissioned into the navy on January 1, 1983.



SPROUTS | Filming has started in rural areas - the situation in the state has started to return to normal and with the release of web serial short films and information screens, silver screen movies have started appearing in rural areas. PIC : VIJAYKUMAR HARISHCHANDRE

## CROMPTON'S NEW SOLARIUM QUBE PLUS WATER HEATER THAT HELPS YOU GET THE PERFECT HOT WATER

SPROUTS | NEWS NETWORK

Winters have arrived with an extra dose of focus on health and hygiene. As we move from cold showers to warm relaxing ones, there is no better elixir than having your temperature at the optimum level to help you power through the day or unwind at the end of the day with Perfect Hot Water.

With humane innovations, state-of-the-art product features and a legacy of superior-performance for over 75 years, Crompton Greaves Consumer Electricals Ltd., India's most preferred brand of quality, trust and modern-day technology has launched the new Solarium Qube Plus Water Heater. From their highly rated and appreciated Solarium range, the new water heater comes with a superior heating performance that offer precision heating, smart energy management and a contemporary digital display to help us get the Perfect Hot Water!

We all face the hot-water dilemma every morning or evening to make sure it's not too cold or not too warm for our bath. In fact, research has shown that 44° Celsius is considered to be the optimum temperature for the perfect hot-water bath on winter days. Recent innovations have led to Precision Heating Technology that can be a vital aspect in water heaters especially during winters to facilitate a temperature-controlled bathing experience where we can pre-set the temperature digitally instead of manually checking the water from time-to-time. Bringing you comfort and convenience to your everyday life, Crompton's all-new Solarium Qube Plus is the apt solution to your perfect hot water blues. With its smart LED temperature display, precision hot-water technology and not having to worry about electricity bills with its Energy saving Insitu PUF, this latest innovation is the absolute go-to winter essential for a relaxing shower.

Bid adieu to the old-age methods of waiting to get your water heated, constantly checking it manually to get the perfect hot-water. Baths in the cold winter months are no longer a concern as Crompton Solarium Qube Plus brings you comfort, convenience and perfection in one go. Given below are some of the additional features of the product that make it the go-to water heater:

< Precision Heating Technology is the ideal tool to enjoy a temperature-controlled bathing experience. One can pre-set the temperature to the desired degree with digital control and get the perfect hot water.

< Advanced 3-level safety that keeps all parameters in check for protection against electric shocks and auto-off function in case of malfunction.

< Smart Digital Display that shows the actual temperature of the water along with LEDs that transition from

blue to orange indicating the switch from cold to hot water.

Inspired by the latest designs and a Smart Digital Display, this modern-day water heater from Crompton also has free installation and free pipes thereby, providing a comforting and hassle-free service to your doorstep.

The range comes in capacities of 15L with a price at MRP 14000 & 25L with a price at MRP 16200. It is available across markets in India as well as e-commerce.



## BITMEX INTRODUCES MOST REWARDING CRYPTO EARN PRODUCT YET

DILIP KALEKAR | SPROUTS

Global cryptocurrency trading platform BitMEX announced the launch of BitMEX EARN. This interest-bearing product offers the highest annual percentage rate (APR) of all public Earn products.

The product rewards users who subscribe their funds for a set period with an interest payout, ranging from 14 - 100% APR. Furthermore, BitMEX EARN is the only product of its type in the market that is 100% insurance fund backed. All payouts are guaranteed by the BitMEX insurance fund - one of the largest funds in the industry.

The first cryptocurrency available on BitMEX EARN is Tether (USDT ERC-20). BitMEX customers who subscribe to the product before 7 December 2021 can subscribe to an early bird offer to earn up to a 100% APR on Tether for deposits up to USDT 1,000 per user and up to 14% APR for deposits up to USDT 100,000 per user. More details on BitMEX EARN can be found here.

Alexander Höpftner, Chief Executive Officer at BitMEX, said: "BitMEX EARN allows anyone

to easily generate a double-digit return - much higher than the rates you'll get with TradFi products. Our EARN products' APR far outpaces what's offered on other crypto platforms, whose headline rates on similar products are usually tied to unattainable staking requirements. We've also streamlined our subscription process, making this a product that appeals to all kinds of traders - not just the pros."

BitMEX EARN is part of its ambitious business transformation, known as its 'Beyond Derivatives' strategy. BitMEX is adding five new global business segments (Spot, Brokerage, Custody, Information Products, and Academy) after having launched a rigorous user verification and compliance programme in 2020. In January 2021, BitMEX announced the completion of its user verification programme, which made BitMEX one of the largest crypto derivatives exchanges to have a fully verified active user base. BitMEX EARN launches on 1 December 2021, with subscriptions open for the first two products until 7 December 2021 (or until fully subscribed). To subscribe or learn more, visit the BitMEX EARN webpage.

## Sprouts wishes Happy Birthday



Sagar Yadav  
Shivsainik



Sandeep Kavthekar  
Self Employed



Foram Shah  
Banker



Urja Sheth  
student



Purna Keny  
Student



Jennifer Kehzhake  
Self Employed



Dipali Pandit  
Teacher



Falguni Mehta  
Self Employed



Ishani Joshi  
Student



Neelima Azeem  
Television Actor



Birthday Celebration Of  
Sayali Vivek bhandari  
With Chinmay Pandit



# Sprouts

Gold Rate: ₹ 49,266

1 US Dollar: ₹ 74.33

Temperature: 30° C

Vol. No.01 ▶ Issue: 357 ▶ Mumbai ▶ English Daily

KNOW DIFFERENT, GROW DIFFERENT ▶ Thursday, November 18, 2021 ▶ Pages: 10 ▶ Price: ₹ 5

## FINALLY RBI KNEELS DOWN

**Sprouts  
BRAND STORY**

### RBI SURRENDERS TO ADAMANT EMPLOYEES

The employees of RBI have been drawing better pay and hefty allowances from the day one. Yet they have been demanding pay hike since last 4 years. The Indian economy has become delicate due to corona virus induced prolonged lock downs. Despite this, the employees have raised the weapon of strike. Under the circumstances stern action was expected from RBI. But instead it has adopted a conciliatory approach.

The Indian economy is beset with many economic frauds and the role of RBI officers and employees has been conducive to those swindling the state exchequer. Under the circumstances it is essential that a high level inquiry is conducted into corrupt deals of the officers and employees. Even the pay should be performance-based and RBI should take strict action against irresponsible employees.

UNMESH GUJARATHI  
www.sproutsnews.com

The Human Resource Department (HRD) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) stepped in to intervene in a timely manner over an agitation planned by the unions to protest against wage revision issue that was pending for nearly four years.

The United Forum of Reserve Bank officers and Employees that serves as an umbrella organization for all categories of RBI staff called off its strike proposal following a reassurance received from their HRD bosses.

The Union spokesperson informed the SPROUTS that

they decided to withdraw their agitation that was planned to commence on Tuesday after the Chief General Manager of the HRD requested for truce. He cited that the wage settlement issue was currently in an advanced stage and a resolution can be expected shortly.

The Union voiced its concern over an unresponsive management attitude that had prevailed for over four years when it came to discussing and negotiating their wage revisions. "This happened despite our repeated attempts to bring it to their attention," the Union spokesperson disclosed.

The constituent unions of the Central Bank's umbrella body decided to retract on their plan to agitate after receiving a written communication from the HRD on their wage revision count.

The Union earlier stated that a written assurance was kept as a prerequisite for their agitation being withdrawn.

The team of union leaders who responded to the HRD intervention included Samir Ghosh, Arun Smaddar and Gavin Coelho among others. They stated that they decided to withdraw their agitation in wake of the possibility to facilitate an early settlement.

The agitation plan envisaged by the umbrella union of the RBI staff

was slated to begin with lunch-time gate agitations with their staff including officers adorning black badges from November 23 to 26. It was also planned that subsequently the staff would go on mass casual leave from November 30.

The Unions also expressed their angst over the management's failure to arrive at a decision despite repeated representations and communications to the effect, demanding a speedy settlement in their sensitive wage revision matter.

▶ RBI Unions temporarily call off their agitation

▶ HRD's timely assurance pacifies the Unions

Despite hefty pay, employees demands swell



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Court rejects plea to take statement on record

## CENTRAL VISTA: NOTHING HAPPENING TO DELHI WAQF PROPERTIES, CENTRE TELLS HC

SPROUTS | NEWS NETWORK

The Centre Wednesday assured the Delhi High Court that nothing is happening to Delhi Waqf Board properties in the vicinity of the ongoing Central Vista Redevelopment Project.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta urged Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva to adjourn for three weeks the Board's plea seeking preservation and protection of its heritage properties that are likely to be impacted by the project and said that being a long plan, the redevelopment has not reached the properties in question.

"Kindly have it after three weeks. Nothing is happening to these properties. My learned friend (petitioner) can rest assured. We are before your lordship. It is a very long plan and we have not reached anywhere near it," said the solicitor general who represented the Centre.

The court adjourned hearing in the case till January 20, saying it has full faith in the Solicitor General and turned down the request of the senior lawyer representing the petitioner to take the statement on record.

In its petition, the Delhi Waqf Board represented by



senior advocate Sanjoy Ghose -- has sought the preservation and protection of six of its properties in the area in which the redevelopment work is ongoing -- Masjid Zabta Ganj at Mansingh Road, Jama Masjid at Red Cross Road, Masjid Sunehri Bagh Road Near Udyog Bhawan, Mazar Sunehri Bagh Road behind Moti Lal Nehru Marg, Masjid Krishi Bhawan inside Krishi Bhawan Compound and Masjid Vice President at the official residence

of the Vice President of India.

Claiming that the six properties are more than an ordinary mosque and have a distinction attached to them, the petition has stated that neither the British Government nor the government of India ever created any hindrance in the observance of religious practices at these properties which were always preserved.

The waqf properties, subject matter of the present petition, are all more than 100 years old and

are continuously being used for religious purpose. It is not the case that the Government Buildings were built first and thereafter these properties came into existence, to the contrary, these properties were well in existence when the Government buildings were constructed around them or in the vicinity, the petition filed through lawyer Wajeeh Shafiq has claimed.

In September, the court had granted time to the Centre to state its stand on the petition.

## OMICRON VARIANT: RESUMPTION OF INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS POSTPONED



SPROUTS | NEWS NETWORK

The government on Wednesday decided not to resume scheduled international flights from December 15, less than a week after announcing the decision in the wake of rising concerns over the COVID variant Omicron.

Aviation watchdog DGCA said the effective date for resumption of scheduled commercial international passenger services will be notified in due course. Scheduled international flights remain suspended since March 23, 2020, due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The latest move also comes after Prime Minister Narendra Modi on November 27 asked officials to review the plans for easing international travel restrictions amid concerns over Omicron.

In a circular on Wednesday, DGCA said that in view of the evolving global scenario with the emergence of new Variants of Concern, the situation is being watched closely in consultation with all stakeholders.

"...an appropriate decision indicating the effective date of resumption of scheduled commercial international passenger services shall be notified in due course," the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said. The watchdog also referred to its circular issued on November 26 wherein it was decided that scheduled international flights will resume from December 15.

On November 28, a day after the Prime Minister's directions regarding the easing of international travel curbs, the government had said the decision to resume the services will be reviewed. While no cases of Omicron have been reported in India so far, the authorities have put in place stricter norms for international passengers.

On November 29, Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia said the situation was being closely monitored and reviewed in consultation with other ministries regarding "any further decision" on resuming scheduled international passenger services.

## Those opposed to BJP should come together, says Pawar after meeting Mamata



SPROUTS | NEWS NETWORK

NCP president Sharad Pawar on Wednesday made a fresh pitch for the unity of opposition parties to take on the BJP after meeting West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee here.

Banerjee, notably, made a cryptic remark that there was "no UPA" now.

The Trinamool Congress supremo paid a visit to Pawar on Wednesday after meeting Shiv Sena leaders the day before.

"All those opposed to the BJP are welcome to join us. There is no question of excluding anyone," Pawar told reporters when asked if an alliance without Congress was on the cards.

"We discussed the prevailing situation and the need for all like-minded parties to come together and provide a strong alternative to the BJP," the NCP chief said.

"Leadership is not an issue at this point. We need to unitedly work

against the BJP," he added.

When asked if she wanted Pawar to be the chairperson of the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA), Banerjee said, "Three is no UPA now."

Earlier on Tuesday, Mamata had met Shiv Sena leaders Aadiya Thackeray and Sanjay Raut.

The meeting was seen as an outreach to fellow Opposition leaders by the Trinamool Congress supremo. Mamata was scheduled to meet Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray earlier, but as he is unwell, she met his son and minister Aadiya Thackeray, sources said.

Aadiya also gave her a copy of a coffee-table book of his father's photographs, sources added.

Earlier in the day, Mamata visited the famous Siddhi Vinayak temple here. The West Bengal Chief Minister also paid her respects at the memorial of police constable Tukaram Umbale who died fighting terrorists during the 2008 Mumbai terror attack.

## Cataract operation in Muzaffarpur leaves 26 people blind, probe ordered

SPROUTS | NEWS NETWORK

Three members team of health department on Tuesday started inquiry into the 'blinding' of 26 people in Muzaffarpur, 80 kms from here.

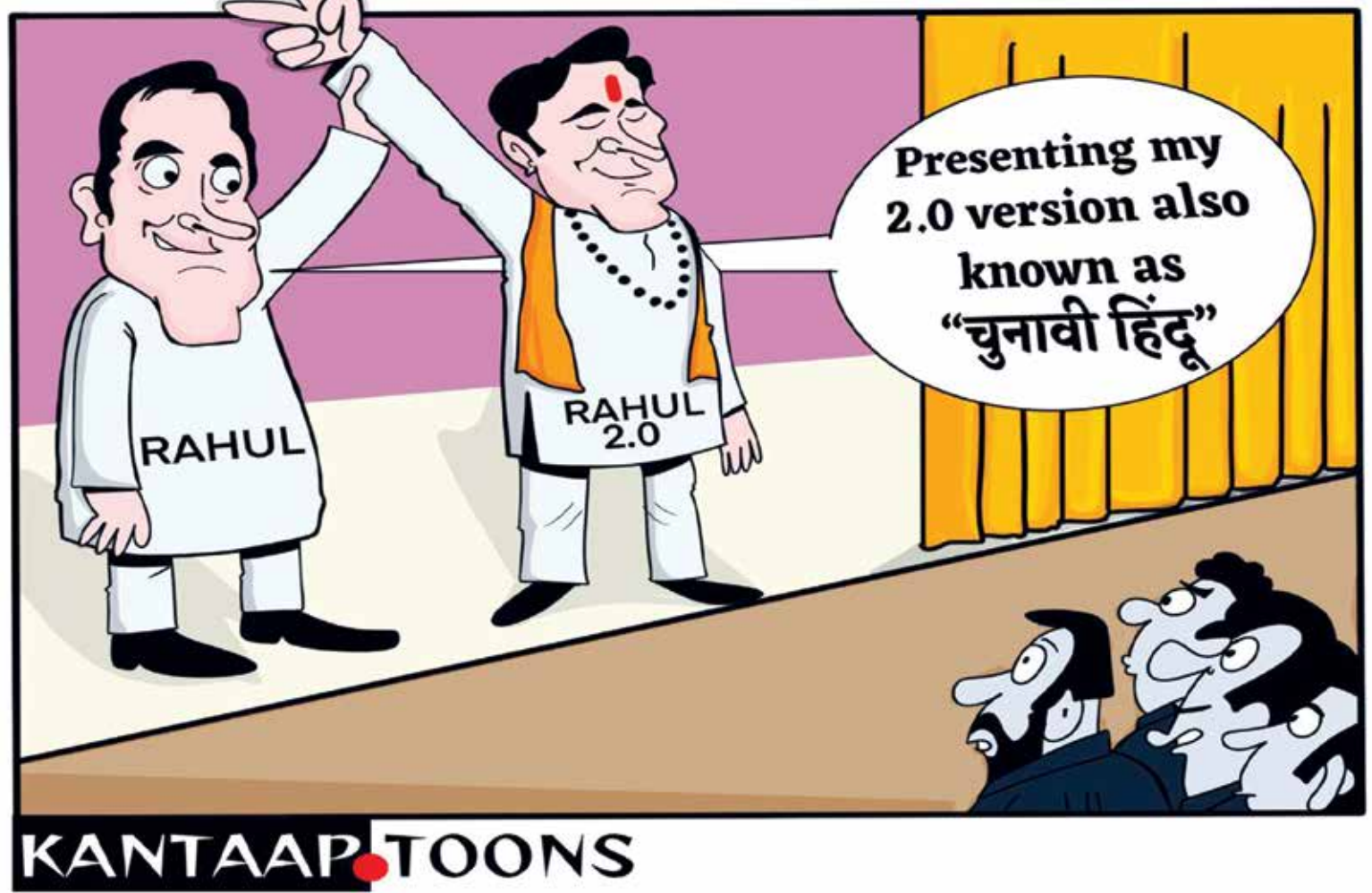
Health minister, Mangal Pandey today said he had received reports about people losing their eyesight after they underwent surgical operations for cataract at the Government Eye Hospital on November 22. Civil surgeon, Dr Vinay Kumar Sharma said the two operation theatres of the hospital have been sealed to facilitate investigation which would be



completed in two days.

People who were operated complained of pain in the eyes and approached the hospital yesterday. Six of them were rushed to Patna medical College hospital where eye surgeons confirmed loss of eye sight. Surgeons said that due to infections patients became blind.

### Sprouts CARTOON OF THE DAY



## Gujarat displaces Maharashtra to become largest manufacturing hub in country

SPROUTS | NEWS NETWORK

Gujarat has emerged as the biggest manufacturing hub in India with the state's Gross Value Addition (GVA) in manufacturing growing at 15.9 per cent annually on average between FY'12 and FY'20 to touch Rs 5.11 lakh crore, displacing Maharashtra, according to data released by the RBI. Maharashtra's annual growth rate during the period was 7.5 per cent, taking the state's total manufacturing GVA to Rs 4.34 lakh crore in FY'20. Maharashtra continues to lead as the nation's biggest services hub.

The worst performers among states which were already among the top ten manufacturing states during the period were Rajasthan, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, with average annual growth rates of 3.8 per cent, 5.5 per cent and 6.9 per cent, respectively during the period. The GVA is essentially GDP minus net product taxes, and reflects growth in supply of goods and services. The other states with the highest manufacturing GVA



were Tamil Nadu at Rs 3.43 lakh crore, Karnataka at Rs 2.1 lakh crore and Uttar Pradesh at 1.87 lakh crore. India's manufacturing GVA grew to Rs 16.9 lakh crore in FY'20 at an average growth rate of 9.7 per cent since FY'12.

Higher investment in Gujarat during the period likely played a key role in allowing the state to outpace the rest of the country in manufacturing growth.

Gujarat witnessed the highest level of capital investment in terms of gross fixed capital formation (GFCF) - a measure of investments - between FY'12 and FY'19 at a total of Rs 5.85

lakh crore ahead of Maharashtra which saw investment of Rs 4.07 lakh crore during the period and Andhra Pradesh which witnessed a cumulative GFCF of Rs 1.49 lakh crore.

A report by KPMG noted that key reforms by Gujarat, including the introduction of a single window for business clearances, easing of labour norms as well as smoother administration of incentive schemes, contributed to boosting ease of doing business in the state and making it one of the country's most attractive destinations for Foreign Direct Investment.

## Odisha announces social security scheme for newspaper hawkers

SPROUTS | NEWS NETWORK

Acknowledging the important role that newspaper hawkers play in dissemination of information and news, chief minister Naveen Patnaik on Tuesday announced a social security scheme for them. The scheme that offers financial compensation to the nearest kin of the hawkers in the event of their natural or accidental death will benefit hawkers registered under the Odisha Unorganised Workers' Social Security Board. Under the scheme, the kin of registered hawkers will be provided with accidental death benefit of Rs 2 lakh and natural death benefit of Rs 1 lakh. Besides, Rs 1.5 lakh compensation will be provided to hawkers in case of complete disability caused by an accident. In case of partial disability, a hawker will be provided with Rs 80,000, if he/she loses both limbs in any mishap and Rs 40,000 for loss of one limb. Keeping in view the financial problems the hawkers are facing owing to the pandemic, the state government has also decided to provide special financial assistance of Rs 3,000 to each hawker.