

PM INAUGURATES THE NEW INTEGRATED TERMINAL BUILDING AT MAHARAJA BIR BIKRAM AIRPORT IN AGARTALA

Chennai, January 05 2022: Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the New Integrated Terminal Building of Maharaja Bir Bikram (MBB) Airport and launched key initiatives like Mukhyamantri Tripura Gram Samridhhi Yojana and Project Mission 100 of Vidyajyoti Schools. Governor of Tripura, Satyadeo Narain Arya, Chief Minister of Tripura Shri Biplab Kumar Deb, Union Ministers Shri Jyotiraditya Scindia and Smt Pratima Bhoumik were among those present on the occasion.



beauty and modern facilities. The airport will play a big role in enhancing air connectivity in the North East. The Prime Minister pointed out that work is going on in full earnest to make Tripura the gateway to the northeast. Road, rail, air and water connectivity infrastructure is getting unprecedented investment. This is turning Tripura into a new hub of business and industry as well as a trade corridor.

Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister said the India of the 21st century will move forward by taking everyone along with the spirit of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas and Sabka Prayas. Unbalanced development where some states lag behind and people deprived of even some basic facilities is not good. This is what the people of Tripura have seen for decades, he said. Shri Modi recalled the times of relentless corruption and governments with no vision or intention of development of the state. After such a scenario, the Prime Minister said that the current regime came up with the Mantra of HIRA - H to Highway, I to Internet way, R to railways and A to Airways for improving the connectivity in Tripura. He added that today Tripura is strengthening and expanding its connectivity on the basis of the HIRA model.

Commenting on the new airport, the Prime Minister said that the airport is a blend of Tripura's culture, natural

Ayushman coverage, insurance cover, KCC and roads leading to enhanced confidence in the rural population. The Prime Minister appreciated the Chief Minister for working to change the definitions to improve the coverage of PMAY. This has resulted in 1.8 lakh families getting pucca houses of which 50 thousand houses have already been given for possession in the state.

The Prime Minister said that "there is no match of a double engine government when it comes to work with double speed. A double engine government means proper use of resources, it means sensitivity and boosting the power of the people, it means service and accomplishment of resolutions, it means united effort towards prosperity".

Praising Tripura's record in taking the welfare schemes to the people, the Prime Minister lauded the state for launching Mukhyamantri Tripura Gram Samridhhi Yojana which is aimed to fulfil the Prime Minister's vision which he articulated from the ramparts of the Red Fort, of taking the schemes to people and reaching the saturation of the coverage. The scheme will promote tap water for every household, housing,

The Prime Minister said that the campaign to vaccinate the youth of the 15-18 age group will ensure that there is no break in the education of the young students. This will alleviate the worries of the students and parents. The Prime Minister informed that in Tripura, 80 percent of the population has received the first dose and 65 percent have received both the doses of vaccine. He expressed the hope that Tripura will soon achieve the target of vaccinating the 15-18 age group fully.

Mukhyamantri Tripura Gram Samridhhi Yojana aims to achieve the benchmark standards for service delivery in core development sectors at the village level. The key sectors selected for this Yojana are household tap connections, domestic electricity connections, all-weather roads, functional toilets for every household, recommended immunization for every child, participation of women in Self Help Groups etc.

The Prime Minister said that Tripura can play an important role in giving the country an alternative to single-use plastic. A huge market is being created in the country for bamboo brooms, bamboo bottles products made here. With this, thousands of people are getting employment or self-employment in the manufacture of bamboo items. He also praised the state's work in organic farming.

The New Integrated Terminal Building of Maharaja Bir Bikram Airport is built at a cost of about Rs 450 crore and is a state of art building spread over 30,000 square metres having modern facilities and supported by the latest IT network-integrated system. Project Mission 100 of Vidyajyoti Schools is aimed to improve the quality of education in the state by converting 100 existing High / Higher secondary schools to Vidyajyoti Schools with state of art facilities and quality education. The project will cover about 1.2 lakh students from Nursery to class XII and will cost around Rs 500 crores in the next three years.

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PHS. Rtn. Dr. G. Saravanan Rotary Club of Royapettah RID 3232 Past President 2017-18 Assistant Governor 2022-23



Profile:
 Dr. G. Saravanan BE., MBA., Ph.D., DNYT., Professional & Chartered Engineer, Registered Medical Practitioner in Alternative Medicine (Naturopathy), Arbitrator, Educationist and Journalist

District Roles:
 Assistant Governor 2022-23
 Associate Director Vocational Services 2013-14
 Associate Chairman Literacy 2019-20
 Associate Chairman GO GREEN 2020-21 & 2021-22
 Regional Secretary 2020-21
 Associate Director Vocational Services 2021-22
 Assistant Governor 2022-23

Professional Summary:
 Strategy and New Product Manager Caterpillar India Private Limited, Thiruvallur
 Experience 26+ Years

Areas of Expertise:
 Quality Management, New Product Development, Facility Management, Project Management, Engineering and Human Relations

Rotary Profile:
 Joined Rotary Club of Royapettah on 17th July 2010 (11 years & 6 months of Service)
 Secretary 2014-15
 President 2017-18

Individual Awards/Accomplishments:
 District Vocational Service Award RID 3230-2013-14
 Best Secretary Award RID 3230-2014-15
 Rotary Avenues of Service Award Rotary International 2015
 Paul Harris Fellow 2010
 RI Presidential Citation 2017-18
 Best Club in overall performance

Recognition:
 Bronze Award RID 3232 2017-18
 Multiple Paul Harris Fellow 2019
 Paul Harris Society Member 2010-11, 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23
 Membership Society Member Featured in Virtual Gallery Silver Level Introduced 33 members so far
 E R E Y Recognition
 EREY Banner Recognition
 Sustaining Member Recognition
 TRF Giving Recognition

Major Milestones:
 PHF in the first 3 months joining Rotary
 First PHS Member of the Club
 1 of the 20 Membership Society Members of District 3232 featured in Virtual Gallery
 Started Rotaract Club for the parent Rotary Club 2017-18
 Started a Charitable Trust for the parent Rotary Club 2017

Rotary Programs:
 Developed a 10 Year Leadership Plan for the Club 2017-18
 Sister Club Agreement with Rotary Club of Tiruvallur RID 3231 2017-18
 Flag Exchange with Rotary Club East Hills Nudungandam Kerala-2018
 Flag Exchange with Rotary Club of Peoria USA 2017
 First District Grant Project of the decade providing water heaters to Government Royapettah Hospital 2017-18
 Launched Vocational Training program for Dental Assistants - 2017-18
 Initiated First Off-Site Members participation/trip to Munnar 2018
 First Holistic Health Check up program conducted for Club members and families in 2018

BORDER ROADS ORGANISATION BREAKS RECORD AT ZOJILA BATTLING EXTREME WEATHER CONDITIONS

Chennai, January 05 2022: Key Highlights For the first time BRO has kept the formidable Zoji mountain pass (altitude 11,649 ft) open beyond 31st December.



BRO's frontline Projects Beacon and Vijayak have been working round the clock in extreme weather conditions to keep the logistic supply line open to the Union Territory of Ladakh.

BRO Karmyogis have kept their detachments functional with great determination and induction of New Equipment helped BRO in achieving this unparalleled feat.

The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has raised its benchmark of excellence yet again by extending access of the formidable Zojila at an altitude of 11,649 ft, that links the Union Territory of Ladakh with the rest of the country. For the first time Zoji mountain pass remained open beyond 31st December.

The BRO achieved this feat through its frontline Projects - Vijayak and Beacon. They are collectively responsible for maintaining the axis that has strategic implications, in addition to the socio-economic well-being of Ladakh. Last year the same was extended till 31st

having achieved the feat which hitherto was considered impossible by many.

Ladakh UT administration and the locals lauded the efforts that this additional window reduces the logistic burden on the UT administration and helps the local inhabitants to stock additional rations and supplies to brave the impending harsh winters.

In the first three days of 2022, about 178 vehicles have been able to transit through the pass by the collective assistance of the BRO and the Police personnel. The numbers are considered significant because with the temperatures plummeting to Minus 20 degree centigrade, the road is subject to extreme frosting with blizzard like conditions, which can lead to accidents. Thus, besides snow clearance, the axis is subjected to maintenance on a daily basis to keep it road worthy, which is achieved by the relentless and selfless efforts of the Karmyogis of BRO.

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 ஸ்டார் ரெயின்போ சர்வீசஸ்
 11,SOUTH PERUMAL KOIL STREET, VADAPALANI, CHENNAI - 600 026.
8148231942 / 8144337349
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ALL ONLINE SERVICES

Amara Raja Batteries to invest in Europe-based InoBat Amara Raja gains key foothold in booming European EV market The investment provides access to cutting edge EV battery technology and manufacturing expertise

Chennai, January 05, 2022: Amara Raja Batteries Limited ("Amara Raja" or "the Company"), India's leading industrial and automotive battery major, today announced plans to invest in InoBat Auto ("InoBat"), a European technology developer and manufacturer of premium innovative batteries for E-mobility.

The initial investment will give Amara Raja a key foothold in the thriving European EV ecosystem, where multiple battery gigafactories are being set up to support the region's determined EV push, including in the UK, which is seeing a rising need to address increasing demand for electric vehicles.

This strategic step will significantly enable Amara Raja, which laid out its ambitions in the green technology space as part of its bold 'Energy and Mobility' strategy earlier this year, access expertise that will help deploy the required technologies for the manufacture of batteries for E-Mobility applications. The investment thereby will open new R&D avenues for the Company while

allowing it to adapt InoBat's highly innovative battery technology to the markets that Amara Raja already serves.

InoBat specialises in the pioneering research, development, manufacture, and provision of premium innovative electric batteries custom-designed to meet the specific requirements of customers within the automotive, commercial vehicle, motorsport, and aerospace sectors. By adopting a "cradle-to-cradle" strategy within a responsible ESG frame work, InoBat aims to drive the implementation of electric mobility solutions.

InoBat is currently developing a battery research and development centre and production line in Voderady, Slovakia. The next phase of the project will focus on a manufacturing scale-up through a number of gigafactories planned across Europe and globally. It is backed by a strong consortium of partners, including CEZ, one of the major European Utilities and Rio Tinto, the global mining giant, who have made an investment in the company.

Vikram Gourineni, Executive Director, Amara Raja Batteries said, "We are excited to announce our investment in InoBat. InoBat has proven its capability to develop innovative battery technologies in a short span of time. Its "cradle-to-cradle" approach supports Amara Raja's own goals on sustainability and will help to taper long-term dependence on the import of critical raw materials. Combining our respective strengths will give Amara Raja a foothold in the booming global EV market. We will jointly explore future opportunities together to adapt the advanced battery technology developed by InoBat for markets served by Amara Raja. We believe this technology can significantly move the needle and accelerate India's own EV ambitions."

Marian Bocek, Chief Executive Officer of InoBat Auto said, "Today's announcement is strategically important for InoBat and its planned gigafactories across various parts of Europe. It shows that unique collaborative



partnerships are vital for driving forward the uptake of E-mobility solutions globally, including the emerging markets. Furthermore, it paves the way for our further expansion and the application of our own "cradle-to-cradle" approach. We are delighted to be partnering with Amara Raja, who have built successful business and demonstrated experience of introducing contemporary energy storage technologies over the years in emerging markets across Indian Ocean Rim geographies. We are committed to work together to create the most efficient, best value batteries possible to help deliver a sustainable future for all."

HDFC Life completes the acquisition of Exide Life

Chennai, January 05, 2022: HDFC Life Insurance Company Limited ("HDFC Life") announced the completion of the acquisition of Exide Life Insurance Company Limited ("Exide Life") today, subsequent to receiving all relevant regulatory approvals. Effective today, Exide Life will operate as a wholly owned subsidiary of HDFC Life. Pursuant to the agreement, there was a cash pay-out of Rs. 726 crore and 8,70,22,222 equity shares at an issue price of Rs. 685 per

share were allotted to Exide Industries Limited ("Exide Industries"). Exide Industries now holds 4.1% stake in HDFC Life. The process for merger of Exide Life into HDFC Life will be initiated shortly.

Exide Life's agency based distribution model, strong presence in South India and experience across tier 2 and tier 3 locations complements HDFC Life and will help expand its market and bolster its proprietary distribution.

Commenting on the

development, Vibha Padalkar, MD & CEO, HDFC Life said, "We are extremely happy to welcome the Exide Life family into ours. This first-of-its-kind acquisition is a reflection of our intent to build a stronger India by providing a financial safety-net to more people. HDFC Life is committed to protecting lives and doing all it can to lessen the life insurance gap that exists in our country. We recognise that the life insurance market in India is multi-faceted, where one solution

might not fit all. Different distribution channels and a varied product mix help cater to different customer cohorts across the diverse Indian geography, and this acquisition is an important milestone towards our strategic objective of bringing more people into the fold of financial protection."

She added, "We would like to thank the out-going MD & CEO of Exide Life, Kshijit Jain for his stellar leadership in helping build a strong institution."

"Mrs. Usha Thiva" from "Chennai, Tamil Nadu" was crowned as "Mrs. Cute Smile" at India's Most Prominent Pageant "Mrs. INDIA Galaxy 2021" organized by Vibrant Concepts held in New Delhi recently.

Chennai, January 05, 2022: Mrs Usha has completed her Masters in Business Administration and has established two fashion Brands Venora and Vivarsha respectively. The motto of the brands is to "encourage women empowerment and to meet the clothing needs of the less fortunate."

From consumers with overflowing cupboards to millions of people who can barely access basic clothing, Usha is on a mission to solve the problems on both sides of the societal pyramid.

Her brand Venora target customers who look for 'luxuriously, fashionable, and comfortable' outfits, catering to major markets in International platform and on the other side she thrives to empower local women from rural parts of Tamilnadu by skilfully training them and giving employment opportunities, via her other brand Vivarsha. She believes that supporting the livelihood of rural women is crucial. Besides the salaries, a part of the revenue from Vivarsha's sales are spent on charity as



well Also, Usha is a passionate Fashion Curator and to her the key to work in the creative fashion industry is adaptability and one's willingness to change while

still working towards overall vision.

The Pageant Mrs. India Galaxy was directed by Ginny Kapoor and Gagandeep Kapoor. Usha competed against 40 other

gorgeous women from India and the show was held to support the novel cause to Stop Violence Against Women.

The grand finale event as witnessed by eminent jury members -

Gagan Verma - Mr. Super Model Universe 2016, Actor and Model

Amita Panda - Mrs. Universe III 2019

Shankar Sahney - Bollywood Singer

Purva Ranawat - International Yoga Expert and Model

Mrs. Usha believes this accomplishment wouldn't have been possible without the grace of the Almighty and she extends her sincere gratitude to her parents, her sons, her beloved husband, her brothers and sisters and her philosopher Mr. Balaji for supporting her vision and encouraging her throughout.

The Guest of Honour Celebrity Fashion Choreographer Karun Raman along with Mrs. Usha Thiva graced the press conference held at Hotel Aadithya, Chennai.

APOLLO HOSPITALS LAUNCHES VACCINATION PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN AGED 15-18 YRS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Chennai, January 05, 2022: Apollo Hospitals today inaugurated the vaccination program for children in the age group of 15 to 18 years. This is in line with the Hon'ble Prime Minister's announcement of expansion of the COVID vaccination program to include children above the age of 15 years from January 3, 2022.

Dr Prathap C Reddy, Chairman, Apollo Hospitals Group said, "Today is indeed an important milestone in our battle against COVID-19. With the launch of vaccinations for children between 15-18 years, we have made a beginning in protecting our future and the future of the country. This is an age group that needs to be protected against COVID and vaccination will help in mitigating the severity and preventing complications of



COVID in children. Timely vaccination will also help in their return to normal life of not just education in the classroom but also sports and other cultural activities necessary for all-round development."

Apollo Hospitals is India's largest private vaccination provider and has been at the frontlines in supporting the Government's COVID

vaccination program since it began in January 2021. Apollo Hospitals has all the infrastructure and necessary arrangements in place to vaccinate citizens of the new eligible age-group.

Following the coverage of the adult population, The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has issued guidelines for COVID vaccination for children aged 15-18 years. Based on

this directive, Apollo Hospitals today launched the Paediatric COVID Vaccination Programme for 15 - 18 year olds. The vaccine administered would be Covaxin, which has received emergency use approval for use in children by the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI). Covaxin would be administered in two doses at a gap of 28 days.

Registration of children in the eligible age group and categories can book the vaccination time-slots in the Apollo 24/7 or can register online with their school ID card / Aadhaar card using the Co-WIN App or by visiting the Co-WIN website (https://www.cowin.gov.in). Children should their Aadhaar card or any other national identity card or children can also use their school ID cards for registration.

Akshaya Patra Foundation and UN World Food Programme to collaborate on improving and leveraging India's flagship school meal programme effective

Chennai, January 05, 2022: The Akshaya Patra Foundation (TAPF) and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) in India will partner on enhancing the effectiveness of the Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN) scheme (earlier Mid-Day Meal Scheme).

An agreement was signed between Mr. Bishow Parajuli, Representative and Country Director for WFP in India and Shri Chanchalaphi Dasa, Vice-Chairman, The Akshaya Patra Foundation today in New Delhi.

"The partnership is a strategic force multiplier bringing deep work and experience together. Since inception in 1961, school meals have been part of WFP's mission. WFP has six decades of experience supporting school feeding

and a trajectory of working with more than 100 countries to set up sustainable national school feeding programmes," said Mr. Parajuli.

"India is strategically important for School Meals Coalition that was launched last year with WFP as a coordinating body, as it implements the largest school feeding programme in the world, providing a nutrition safety-net to school children. India's excellent track record of school feeding programmes and various associated initiatives can be of interest to other countries," he added.

"The country has taken strides in achieving food security. The school feeding program in India has ensured food security for children. With this partnership, we aim to complement WFP's global

network of running large-scale feeding programs across the world with our expertise in addressing hunger at the grassroots level," said Shri Chanchalaphi Dasa, Vice-Chairman, The Akshaya Patra Foundation.

"We are further looking forward to cross-learning exercise between countries in the region and the global South on the school meals programme to ensure a world where children need not toil before they eat; where children need not earn before they learn," Mr. Dasa added.

Considering their collective experience and expertise in the fight against hunger and malnutrition, this longer-term partnership aims to bridge operational and execution gaps in food safety and hygiene projects, capacities of the cooks-cum-helpers, as well as the nutritional

quality of the meals provided.

From knowledge sharing between the two organisations to jointly conducting workshops to showcase the implementation of PM-POSHAN in India, the proposed areas of partnership are likely to include dialogues with the Government to bring forth more policy and strategy-related elements that will enhance the quality of the school meal programme.

The WFP and Akshaya Patra will form a Steering Committee comprising representatives from both organisations, which will meet quarterly to plan, discuss and review various aspects of this collaboration. Both organisations will bring in financial resources as required to support the implementation of the activities.

DG NCC Lt Gen Gurbirpal Singh inaugurates NCC Republic Day Camp - 2022

Chennai January 05 2022: Director General of National Cadet Corps (DG NCC) Lieutenant General Gurbirpal Singh formally inaugurated NCC Republic Day Camp - 2022 at Delhi Cantt on January 04, 2022. The inauguration ceremony started with 'Sarv Dharm Pooja'.

The RDC is held at the culmination of one complete year of training of NCC cadets and is conducted at Parade Ground, Delhi Cantonment from January 01 to 29 every year. The Camp is attended by around 2,200 cadets, specially selected from all over India. Inter Directorate competitions in training, cultural competitions and National Integration awareness programmes are conducted during the



month-long camp. Two NCC marching contingents participate in the Republic Day Parade on Rajpath on January 26 every year. To commemorate India's 75 years of Independence, the theme of this year's Republic Day Camp is 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'.

The RDC-2022 is being conducted under the umbrella of full Covid-19 protocols, with a reduced strength of

1,600 cadets, including 560 girl cadets drawn from 17 State Directorates covering all the States and Union territories. The camp will culminate with the Prime Minister's Rally on January 28, 2022.

Speaking on this occasion, Lt Gen Gurbirpal Singh welcomed the cadets and congratulated them on getting selected for the most prestigious camp of the NCC. He advised the

cadets to display the highest qualities of character, maturity and selfless service as well as the highest standards of discipline and conduct, maintaining a spirit of camaraderie and teamwork cutting across the barriers of region, language, caste and creed during their stay.

The DG NCC also asked the cadets to participate wholeheartedly & derive maximum benefits from each activity during the month-long camp, while at the same time following the correct COVID-19 protocols. He further added that the aim of the camp is to enhance self-confidence of the cadets, deepen their value systems and provide an exposure to the rich culture and traditions of the Nation.

The Tata Starbus India's favourite bus celebrates 1 lakh happy owners Available in varied applications, the state-of-the-art buses are designed for reliability, comfortable travel and ease of driving

Chennai, January 05, 2022: Tata Motors, India's largest commercial vehicle manufacturer, celebrates 1 lakh Starbus customers. The Tata Starbus is the most sold fully-built bus brand in the country and has been synonymous with passenger comfort, reliability and ease of driving. The Starbus platform is available in varied configurations to perfectly suit a host of applications like staff, school transportation and has been an important pillar in the country's public transportation sector. The Starbus is also available as an electric bus and has been successfully running in several cities across India. The Starbus has been the preferred choice of bus for several fleet operators for its low cost of ownership and high profitability.

Highlighting the success of the Starbus, Mr. Rohit Srivastava, Vice President, Product Line Buses, Tata Motors said, "It is a moment of great pride and a testimony from our customers as we celebrate a significant



milestone of 1 lakh Starbus vehicles on Indian roads. The Tata Starbus has proved to be the most versatile bus in the industry offering a luxury travel experience in the staff transportation application and safe and reliable travel as a school bus. The Tata Starbus has become one of the strongest brands in commercial vehicle industry and an integral part of India's transportation sector. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our customers for their continued trust in Tata Motors."

With the Starbus, Tata Motors introduced the OEM-built bus concept in India. Leveraging Tata Marcopolo's in-depth knowledge in body building, the Starbus' aesthetically-designed body and modular architecture guarantees enhanced customer experience and maximises revenue potential for the fleet owners. Built at the state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in Dharwad, Karnataka, the Starbus offers high reliability and flawless build quality. The Starbus platform has been

constantly evolving over the years and strategically identifying and filling whitespaces in the industry, ahead of its time. Tata Starbus family will continue to develop and offer innovative solutions to cater to the evolving needs of customers.

The Starbus family follows Tata Motors' Power of 6 philosophy that offers greater profits, enhanced performance, increased comfort and convenience, improved design and higher value. It also comes with the standard fitment of Fleet Edge Tata Motors' next-gen digital solution for optimal fleet management, to further increase the uptime and reduce the total cost of ownership. Tata Motors offers Sampooma Seva and Tata Samarth the company's commitment to commercial vehicle driver welfare, uptime guarantee, on-site service, customised annual maintenance and fleet management solutions, amongst other benefits.

VACCINATION PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN AGED 15-18 YRS. STARTED AT APOLLO HOSPITALS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Chennai, January 05, 2022: Apollo Hospitals will begin the vaccination program for children in the age group of 15 to 18 years across Apollo Hospitals Vaccination Centres in the country tomorrow. This is in line with the Hon'ble Prime Minister's announcement of expansion of the COVID vaccination program to include children above the age of 15 years from January 3, 2022.

The vaccine administered would be Covaxin, which has

received emergency use approval for use in children by the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI). Covaxin would be administered in two doses at a gap of 28 days.

Apollo Hospitals is India's largest private vaccination provider and has been at the frontlines in supporting the Government's COVID vaccination program since it began in January 2021. Apollo Hospitals has all the infrastructure and necessary arrangements in place to vaccinate citizens of

the new eligible age-group.

Registration of children in the eligible age group and categories and/or booking of vaccination time-slots in the Apollo 24/7 app has now begun.

Apollo Hospitals' specially trained staff will be deployed to take care of the vaccination for children above 15 years of age. All recommended Government protocols will be followed including identity checks before administration of the

vaccine shots, validation of data in Co-WIN app, observation for 30 minutes post vaccination, and AEFI (adverse effects following immunization) management if any. Proper maintenance of the cold chain for vaccine storage, and biomedical waste management will be ensured. The vaccination process will follow infection control practices including screening of all beneficiaries for fever, physical distancing, hand hygiene, universal masking, and safe injection practices.

Reliance Plans To Raise Up To \$5 Billion In US Debt: Report Surge in online demand for products and services in Tier II cities re-defining India's growth story: Just Dial Consumer Insights

Chennai, January 05, 2022: With strong signs of economic recovery supported by increasing vaccination numbers, India at large seems to be getting back to clocking overall economic growth with Tier-II towns and cities emerging as the new engine of this growth curve, reports Just Dial Consumer Insights.

As per latest Just Dial insights, right from the onset of the festive season till the year-end festivities, Tier-II cities have been driving consumption growth and are at par or in some instances have surpassed Tier-I cities in terms of overall demand cutting across products and services in various areas. Higher disposable incomes and a wider exposure coupled with deeper internet penetration and access, India's Tier II cities seem to have taken a mammoth leap to grab the front-seat in steering the country's demand surge and thereby trigger economic growth.

During the Navratras, Tier-II cities witnessed robust demand growth for demand for caterers compared to Tier-I cities. The ensuing Dhanteras also saw a high demand surge for precious metals - gold, silver, and diamond - in Tier-II cities vis-à-vis Tier-I.

Commenting on this interesting trend, Prasun Kumar, Chief Marketing Officer at Just Dial said: "Covid-induced lockdowns

have increased online adoption of services across Tier-II cities as well. Hence, we are witnessing a demand growth on Just Dial across India's Tier-II towns and cities for a host of services and products. This increasing demand growth across smaller towns and cities augurs well for India's overall socio-economic growth."

For the wedding season, demand rise for a host of services in Tier-II cities was almost 2X of India's overall growth rate. Even for the holiday season, growth rate of searches across travel and tourism related categories have shot up by 51% across India but the rate remained higher in Tier-II cities vis-à-vis Tier-I cities. The demand growth in Tier-II cities was at 54% ahead of Tier-I cities, where the rate of growth was 49%. The rise in service sector across India's smaller towns and cities benefits the flourishing gig economy and indicates that the overall economy is recalibrating well.

"There is an increasing online demand for a host of services in Tier-II towns and cities. This indicates that the gig economy in sectors like wedding, food delivery, and tourism is flourishing well. With access to quality education and internet, Tier II cities are increasingly becoming digital that also benefits big and small businesses alike. Just Dial looks forward to leading this

trend by enabling local businesses to get online build the future discourse of the Indian economy," said Kumar.

Tier-II cities witnessed robust growth during the festivities of Navratri and Durga Puja with demand for caterers registering a significant rise across Tier-II cities compared to Tier-I. Trivandrum, a Tier-II city, saw the maximum demand, while Tier-III cities Kangra, and Saharanpur were second and third respectively across the country.

Demand for wedding services across the country grew by 49.7% QoQ with most of this demand being generated by Tier-II cities that saw a growth of 106% benefitting the growing gig economy at large. The demand surge for precious metals too remained higher in Tier-II cities. In terms of gold, demand growth rate in Tier-II towns (24%) remained marginally ahead of Tier-I cities (22%).

For silver, Tier-II cities (40%) saw 2X growth rate vis-à-vis Tier-I (20%) while demand for diamond as well remained higher in Tier-II cities (38%) compared to Tier-I cities (14%).

The demand growth for budget hotels, picnic spots, local tourist attractions and farmhouses have been on a rise as Just Dial witnessed a 51% YOY growth in searches

for all travel and tourism related searches. This demand growth was higher in Tier-II cities at 54% ahead compared to Tier-I cities, where the rate of growth was 49%. Just Dial compared consumer trends for the Oct-Nov 2021 period vis-à-vis same period in 2020 when unlocking was taking place in a phased manner to analyse the demand trends in the domestic travel and tourism sector.

Similarly, Tier-II cities saw a tremendous growth over Tier-I cities during winter festivities. Demand for restaurants, pubs, food delivery service in tier-II cities have witnessed a surge of 95% over tier-I which saw 21%.

In Tier-II cities, Surat, Kozhikode, Kakinada, Malappuram, and Srinagar were the leading five cities with maximum demand for food delivery services while Lucknow, Bhopal, Visakhapatnam, Kanpur, and Jaipur were the top 5 cities that saw maximum demand for pubs in the Tier-II category.

The demand for sarees too witnessed a huge surge and Banarasi and Bengali Taant topped the maximum online searches for sarees in India. Banarasi sarees dominated almost 25% of the searches pan-India with Tier-II cities generating more demand (40%) than their Tier-I peers (26%).

Youngest Child to Successfully Undergo Small Intestine Transplant in Asia (Enters Asia Book of Records)

Chennai, January 05, 2022: Rela Hospital, a multi-specialty, quaternary care hospital in Chennai, has entered the Asia Book of Records for having successfully performed a small intestine transplant surgery on a 4-year-old boy from Bangalore, the youngest in Asia to have undergone this surgery. This rare procedure was recognised by The Asian Book of Records as Asia's Youngest Small Intestine Transplant Surgery, the certificate of Asia Book of Records was handed over to Prof. Mohamed Rela, Chairman and Managing Director, Rela Hospital, today by Mr. Vivek, a representative of Asia Book of Records in the presence of Mr. Ma. Subramaniam, Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Tamil Nadu and Dr J Radhakrishnan, IAS, Principal Secretary Health and Family Welfare, Government of Tamil Nadu.

A healthy and active child, Master Guhan developed sudden and erratic vomiting for 2 days, this got Mr. Swaminathan, the father of Master Guhan worried and rushed him to the neighbourhood hospital thinking it could be a routine stomach infection. To their surprise, the doctors told them that he has a rare condition called volvulus, a rare complication, in which intestine loop twists resulting in cutting off the blood supply to that intestinal loop. An emergency surgery had to be performed, which revealed to the surgeons that the intestinal loop has been completely necrosed (non-viable) and had to be removed, this meant that stomach was attached to skin (stoma). Small intestine, the lower part of the digestive system, is to absorb most of the nutrients from the food. With no small intestine, whatever master guhan eats, will not be digested and just come out of the stoma. Any food taken via mouth will



increase gastric secretions, resulting in dehydration and electrolyte imbalance. He was totally dependent on intravenous nutrition and he was connected to infusion pump 24 hours a day to deliver the required nutrients to his body.

Master Guhan, up until then, was hooked on an infusion pump for 'intravenous feeding' was referred to Rela Hospital. Following medical evaluation of Guhan, the family was informed that an intestinal transplantation is the only solution ahead of them. Mr. Swaminathan, father of Master Guhan came forward to donate a part of his small intestine. The clinical team headed by Prof. Mohamed Rela successfully performed this 7-hour long complex transplant surgery on September 13, 2021, during which 150-cm of the father's small intestine was transplanted to Master Guhan.

After months of total dependency on intravenous nutrition, including 5 weeks on this external feeding post-surgery, Master Guhan has fully recovered. With his small intestine functioning perfectly well, he is now free to have any kind of food like other children of his age. The donor, Mr. Swaminathan has also resumed his day-to-day life, a healthy life.

Expressing appreciation for this accomplishment, Mr. Ma. Subramaniam, Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Tamil

Nadu, congratulated the management and doctors of Rela Hospital for entering the Asia Book of Records by performing a rare small intestine transplant and bringing back the boy to lead a normal life like other children.

Talking about the procedure, Prof. Mohamed Rela, said, "I feel extremely happy when I see the child leading a normal life, freed forever from the infusion machine. He was totally dependent on it for several weeks, ever since his small intestine was removed. Transplanting a healthy small intestine was the only permanent cure, we managed to successfully perform the intestinal transplant. Small intestine transplant is a rarely done in India and I appreciate the determination of the parents to get their child back to lead a normal life."

"For a child of his age, Guhan has already gone through more than most of the kids in the world, and to hear that a transplant was the only option was utterly terrifying but the detailed clinical explanation made us understand that we had to do this. Thanks to the doctors at Rela hospital for their constant reassurance and educating us on every and every step, that made us very comfortable and feel at ease. We will be forever thankful to the to Rela sir and hospital for giving our baby a second chance at life. We now have so many new years to look forward to together as a family",

said Mr. Swaminathan, Father and donor for Master Guhan.

Dr Nareesh Shanmugam, Senior Consultant - Children liver and gastro specialist, Rela Hospital said, "Usually children lose only a small portion of intestine due to volvulus. We medically manage the child in our small intestine rehabilitation unit for the remaining intestine to gradually regain function and to start processing food normally. However, Master Guhan's case was even more complicated, he had lost his entire small intestine to volvulus, and there was no chance for rehabilitation. Hence his small intestine was removed, and nutrients were put directly into his bloodstream intravenously in liquid form. Luckily, we had a ready and loving donor in his father. With the transplanted intestine, Guhan can now move around independently and eat normally."

Rela Hospital performs small intestine and multivisceral transplant, a highly specialised operation that are only carried out in a small number of specialist centres worldwide. The procedures need extensive matching to avoid/reduce the risk of rejection. In some instances, the small intestine can be obtained from the living donor, but due to the risk to the donor, these are not commonly performed worldwide.



"Media Chamber Award" for Outstanding Service to the "Public Relations 2021" Presented to Chennai based Srinivasa Public Relations Administrator N.Venkatachalam by Neethiyin Kural (Voice of Justice) by C.R. Bhaskar and Dr.K.Kumar, President of the Media Chamber and President of the Secretariat Journalists Association. Tamil film Producer K.Rajan also seen

