

**Union Agriculture Minister says Farmers and Industry complement each other**  
**"Whatever projects PM Modi undertakes, they are also taken to conclusion" - Tomar at the CII Partnership Summit**

Chennai, March 14 2023: Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Shri Narendra Singh Tomar has said that Farmers and Industry are complementary to each other, - industries cannot function without farmers and without the Industry, Farming cannot be remunerative. The role of the government is important towards both the Farmers and the Industry. It is the effort of the government that there should be maximum growth of industries, but at the same time, our 86 percent Small Farmers should be empowered because no matter how much progress we make, but unless these small farmers turn prosperous, the country will not develop. Industry should bear in mind which



programmes will fetch farmers a good price and which path we should follow so that prosperity comes to the homes of the farmers, only then will such exchange of ideas be successful. Shri Tomar said this today in a special session organized during the 28th edition of the Partnership Summit-2023 of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).  
 Shri Tomar said that the government is fulfilling all the requirements to promote the Agriculture sector, increase production & productivity and ease the export of agricultural products and will continue to work in this direction in the future. Shri Tomar said that the industries have their own strong teams, which work till the bottom of the pyramid and they also have the right

economy, so that when all these are combined, only then progress will accelerate.

Shri Tomar said that there was a period when one-sided thinking was used, but now Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has an integrated vision for the overall and balanced development of the country, which CII is also trying to take forward with great enthusiasm. Prime Minister Shri Modi constantly tries to rise beyond the departments because whatever programmes the government has, it is for India, for the people of the country, how those works can move forward, he himself thinks about many programmes. As a result, we see that whatever project is started, no matter how big it is, it is also completed within the same term. Along with monitoring through programmes like PM Gati Shakti, coordinated movement has been made. Shri Tomar said that whatever be the work of agriculture, Prime Minister Shri Modi never lets it be neglected. There was a time when we wanted to learn from the world, today the world wants to learn from India in the field of agriculture.  
 Present on the occasion were Shri Sanjiv Puri, Vice President, Confederation of Indian Industry and CMD, ITC Ltd., Shri Saif Singhal, Chairman, CII Taskforce on Agrochemicals and Chairman Emeritus, PI Industries, other officials and a large number of industry representatives.

feedback systems. In this context, the Ministry officials should keep in touch with the stakeholders so that information exchange takes place in the interest of the farmers. By continuing to work on these principles, farmers and agriculture sector will benefit more. In this series, a dialogue programme of Industry with the Indian Council of Agricultural

Research (ICAR) was organized recently, so that practically the entire agriculture sector including the farmers can get the benefits. Shri Tomar said that agriculture is a priority sector for all of us, which needs the support of technology, research and industries to bring benefits and make farmers prosperous and to further strengthen the agricultural

**NHB introduces simplified process for filing and approval of applications under its Subsidy Schemes**

Chennai, March 14 2023: The National Horticulture Board (NHB) under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare operates back-ended capital investment subsidy schemes for promotion of commercial horticulture and cold chain infrastructure in the country. Under these Schemes, subsidy from 35 to 50 percent is provided for various components as per prescribed cost norms.

demand of farming community to simplify the documentation and sanctioning process under the Schemes of NHB, the matter has been reviewed by Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and based on the recommendations of a duly constituted committee, the scheme design, documentation and sanctioning process has been simplified.

The new scheme design will be effective from 15.03.2023. The salient features of the

simplified scheme design are as under:-

NHB has now done away with two stage system of In-Principle Approval (IPA) and Grant of Clearance (GoC). IPA will not be needed now and applicant will apply straightaway for Grant of Clearance to NHB after sanction of term loan by bank. The term loan sanctioned within 3 months from the date of online application to NHB shall be treated valid.

IPA system has been replaced with Letter of Comfort (LoC) to the desirous applicants to facilitate them to get the term loan sanctioned from the Banks/FIs for their proposed project. However, LoC is not mandatory unlike IPA and it will be issued to only those who so desire as a facility letter to get his/ her term loan sanctioned from the Banks/FIs for the proposed project.

Minimum documents are now required for seeking LoC/GoC.

The processing of LoC/ GoC application will be completely digital, including examination and sanction of applications. The platform has been augmented with the timeline monitoring systems, so that every step can be monitored as per the pre-set target timelines and alerts can be sent to the processing officer / applicant at regular intervals and escalation matrix has been put in place based on ageing analysis of pendency at officer level.

Applicant will be free to apply for LoC/GoC either at AIF or NHB portal. In case loan is sanctioned under AIF, the entire data will be captured as such from AIF portal through API and additional minimum required details, if any would be filled by the applicant online and saved at NHB Portal.

NHB will follow short templates for DPR and Bank appraisal note as prepared by NHB after taking into account the template available on AIF. After application is submitted, automatically an email will be sent to the applicant along with a reply/confirmation link to the financing bank. Concerned bank needs to confirm the authenticity of documents online. Based on the confirmation of documents by the bank NHB will issue GoC.

The stage of inspection of the location for GoC has been replaced with a mobile app based self-inspection. Queries on GoC applications, if any, will be communicated to the applicant/Bank automatically by system/email. Subsidy claim documents will also be submitted by bank/applicant online.

The revised simplified process will not only shorten the timelines for sanctioning of GoC/ subsidy applications but would greatly help the farming community with minimum documentation process. The new system will cut down the present time for sanction of GoC from 6-8 months to less than 100 days.

**MNRE has agreements with Australia, Finland, Germany and UAE for promotion of bilateral cooperation in renewable energy - Union Power & NRE Minister R. K. Singh**

Chennai, March 14 2023: The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy enters into various kinds of agreements with foreign countries from time to time to promote bilateral cooperation in the field of renewable energy.

on 15th February, 2022. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation in the field of Renewable Energy was signed between Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India and Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of the Republic of Finland on 29th April, 2022.

A Joint Declaration of Intent (JDI) on the Indo-German Green Hydrogen Task force was signed between the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), Government of India and the Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK) of the Federal Republic of Germany on 02nd May, 2022.

A Joint Declaration of Intent (JDI) regarding Renewable Energy

Partnership was signed between the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India and the Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of the Federal Republic of Germany on 02nd May, 2022.

A Memorandum of Understanding to promote discussion and cooperation between the Parties in the Potential Areas of Cooperation in the Spectrum of Green Hydrogen Development and Investments in India and the UAE was signed between the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India and the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure, Government of the United Arab Emirates on 13th January 2023.

Electricity is a



concurrent subject and supply/distribution of electricity to all consumers of rural areas falls primarily under the purview of the respective State Governments and/or State Power Utilities. Government of India has supplemented the efforts of the States through its various schemes including Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana (DDUGJY) and Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana (SAUBHAGYA) to help them to achieve the objective of providing uninterrupted power

supply to all villages and households. Under Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana (DDUGJY), it was targeted to connect every inhabited village with electricity by strengthening the rural distribution system. All inhabited villages as per census 2011 stood electrified as on 28th April, 2018 across the country and the scheme has been closed on 31.03.2022.

Further, universal household electrification was targeted under

SAUBHAGYA by providing electricity connections to all un-electrified households in rural areas and all poor households in urban areas in the country. A total of 2.817 crore households were electrified since the launch of Saubhagya, up to 31.03.2021. Thereafter, 4.34 lakh households were electrified under

DDUGJY till 31.03.2022. Accordingly, as on 31.03.2022, a total 2.86 crore households were electrified. The Scheme has been closed on 31.03.2022.

This information was given by the Union Minister of Renewable Energy & Power Sh. R.K. Singh in the Rajya Sabha Today.

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## Project Nanneer: Restoring Nagan Thangal Lake

Chennai, March 14 2023: Tata Communications has partnered with Pitchandikulam Forest officials to rejuvenate and restore the Nagan Thangal Lake for effective groundwater recharge and provide access to safe drinking water for the community in Upparapalayam, Pothur village. The Nanneer project focusses on the restoration work which includes lake deepening, plantation of indigenous trees, shrubs, reeds, setting up of landforms, such as bird islands to attract and enhance the biodiversity. The project benefits around 12,000 people of which 60 per cent are from marginalised communities.

The lake, spread over 15 acres, is desilted to a depth of 1.5 m in 4 acres. Recent rain has contributed to 1,00,000 cubic meters of fresh water in the lake, helping it reach its full capacity. More than



4000 indigenous tropical dry evergreen forest trees and shrubs have been planted around the lake leading to increased biodiversity in the area. In addition, insects, birds and small animals have found a new home, giving a boost to the fauna and flora in the region. Interestingly, it has been noticed that even migratory birds such as Pintail, Common Teal, Common Coot, Marsh Sandpiper, etc. have started to visit the lake.

On 13th March 2023, Tata Communications inaugurated The Blue Green Centre, a

knowledge and learning facility, where the lake's history, local landscape, all details of the restoration project are showcased to spread the awareness of the initiative and promote many more of such projects. The project is connected to the Schools in Action for the Planet project supported by Tata Communications to encourage environment education and action for learners in government schools in Ambattur area, Chennai. School children from 32 government and under-privileged schools (approx. 3000

students) have access and the opportunity to know more about the restoration details closely. Over 400 Tata Communications employees volunteered and clocked 1600+ volunteering hours towards this project. Tata Communications believes in integrating action on climate change, biodiversity, water, and energy into community initiatives, and creating partnerships that promote ecological restoration and regeneration. The Nanneer project is one such initiative to serve the community.

## HP introduces new Chromebook laptops in India to enable smart learning for GenZs

Chennai, March 14 2023: HP today announced the launch of its latest Chromebook notebooks in India – HP Chromebook 15.6, powered by Intel's Celeron N4500 Processor. The all-new addition to the Chromebook portfolio is designed to meet the needs of young students in college and school, supporting them to collaborate, multitask and interlink between work and play, in a blended environment.

In today's hybrid environment, young consumers look for devices that help them seamlessly switch from being productive, to being creative, to staying entertained and even learning. Driven by flair and new tech, the all-new HP Chromebook 15.6 is equipped with large screen and stronger connectivity with Wifi6 and an exceptional battery life of up to 11.5[1] hours (HD), ideal for demanding projects and easy-going entertainment in the hybrid generation. The newest Chromebook 15.6 is the go-to choice



for young students and is easy to carry even while studying on-the-go. It comes with two unique colors to compliment their style and lifestyle perfectly – Forest Teal and Mineral Silver. The smooth painted finish feels premium and gives it a more sophisticated look.

Vickram Bedi, Senior Director - Personal Systems, HP India, said, "PCs are essential in today's hybrid learning approach. At HP, we want to support students in their learning experience by providing the right tools. Our new Chromebook 15.6 laptops are designed to enable connectivity and productivity whether

and personal creations across devices. Compatible with Office365, the device provides hands-free access to Google Assistant, Google Classroom and more to encourage faster and smarter learning.

The new Chromebook features dual mics and a Wide Vision HD camera to support numerous virtual calls. The display comes with micro-edge bezels and 250nits along with dual speakers, creating a mini movie theatre right on the desktop. In addition to the existing storage in the device, users also have access to Google One with a 12 month membership, including 100GB of cloud storage across Google Apps and services. So no matter where you're working or playing, you have access to all of your content in the cloud!

In line with HP's sustainability commitment, the HP Chromebook 15.6 is a built with ocean bound plastic and post-consumer recycled plastic[2].

## Apollo Hospitals Group Completes 500 Pediatric Liver Transplants

Chennai, March 14 2023: Apollo, the world's largest vertically integrated healthcare provider, has been at the forefront of patient care in India and has led the organ transplant revolution in healthcare. Today the Apollo Hospitals Group announced the successful completion of 500 pediatric liver transplants.

The Apollo Transplant program is one of the world's largest and most comprehensive transplant programs, offering a host of state-of-the-art services which include Management of Liver Disease, Management of Kidney Disease, Liver and Kidney Transplantation, Heart and Lung Transplantation, Intestinal, Pancreas and GI Transplant Surgeries and Pediatric Transplant Services.

With 90% success rates, The Apollo Liver Transplant program is a beacon of quality and hope for patients from across the world.

Dr. Prathap C Reddy, Founder Chairman, Apollo Hospitals Group, said, "India is emerging as a world leader in organ transplantation. Organ transplantation is a true act of human kindness and an extraordinary medical achievement. At Apollo Hospitals, we are proud to have established one of the world's leading transplant programs, with world-class infrastructure, cutting-edge technology and the finest medical expertise. We remain committed to providing the best possible care and outcomes for our patients, and to advancing the frontiers of medical science in the field of transplantation. This milestone further reflects our commitment to advancing pediatric liver transplantation and providing the best possible care to our patients. I am immensely heartened at what this program has been able to achieve in a span of two decades. From a time when children with end stage liver disease didn't have any care possibilities, to where we are today – marking 500 transplants in children whose lives have been transformed."

Apollo Hospitals



receives liver transplant patients from over 50 countries. Patients from several countries including Philippines, Indonesia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, Jordan, Pakistan, Kenya, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Sudan, Tanzania, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, CIS, Myanmar and many other have found transformational and affordable solutions in India through Apollo. A patient can undergo liver transplant surgery in India at an affordable cost with excellent outcomes.

Dr. Anupam Sibal, Group Medical Director and Senior Pediatric Gastroenterologist, Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals New Delhi, said, "We are proud to have reached this important milestone and are honored to have been able to help so many children and families in need. Over the years several challenges have been overcome – transplants in small babies weighing as little as 4 kgs, transplants in babies and children with serious medical conditions other than liver failure, ABO incompatible performing close to 50 pediatric liver transplants when the family does not have a blood group compatible donor. We are so happy that our 500th patient is a baby girl and nearly 45% of our patients are now girls. Our dedicated team of doctors, nurses, and support staff have worked tirelessly to provide the highest level of care and support to our patients and their families. Their dedication, hard work, and commitment to excellence have made it possible for us to reach this milestone. From the time we performed the first successful liver transplant in India in 1998, the Apollo Transplant Program has performed more than

4100 liver transplants in children and adults."

Pediatric liver transplants are complex and challenging procedures that require high level of skill and expertise. The medical team at Apollo Hospitals Group has some of the most experienced surgeons, nurses, and support staff in the field working together.

Dr. Neerav Goyal, Senior Consultant, Liver Transplant, Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals New Delhi, said, "We have unmatched technical skills of our highly specialized surgeons and physicians, an infrastructure that is comparable with the best in the world and above all the faith of our patients that we have nurtured over time. We are now able to perform the most complex of liver transplants in babies where the size of the blood vessels is as small as 3-4 mm. Pediatric liver transplantation requires a multidisciplinary team and success requires harmonization between all the team members. The Apollo Liver Transplant Program is now consistently performing close to 50 pediatric liver transplants a year, a number only a handful of centres in the world have achieved".

Apollo Transplant program is well-founded with high-end equipment and state-of-the-art infrastructure that is delivered with the highest possible quality by an eminent pool of globally renowned Transplant Surgeons, Nephrologists, Gastroenterologists, Pediatric Surgeons, Anesthetists, Intensivists and Physicians. Over the past decade, the program has built a

reputation of trust and reliance with the highest quality of care delivered and outcomes unmatched the world over.

Apollo's 500th Pediatric Liver Patient Story – Prisha

In the heartland of Bihar, in a small town Jahanabad, a young middle-class couple joyously and reverently named their first-born daughter "Prisha", literally meaning God's gift. A teacher husband and homemaker wife, they made a simplistic, humble, undemanding couple looking forward to their journey as parents. The first few weeks were blissful but then they realized Prisha contracted jaundiced. An arduous trail from one doctor to another led to complete despair and anguish when they were told she had a disease that was a death sentence, biliary atresia that would cause her liver to fail.

They weren't ready to give up and stepped beyond their humble reach to contact top specialists till they realized that a liver transplant would be lifesaving, and brought her to Apollo at about 6 months of age. Family and friends had tried to discourage them. The challenges were indeed multiple but were overcome by the family's resolve and treating team's commitment. A feeding tube was put in through her nose to supplement feeds and achieve nutritional rehabilitation for the transplant, while preparations were being made. Her mother donated a part of her liver and Prisha recovered beautifully after a successful liver transplant. Prisha weighed only 4.6 kgs at the time of the transplant.

## Second regional workshop of NMP organized in Kochi

Chennai, March 14 2023: A series of regional workshops are being organized to facilitate the wider adoption of the PM GatiShakti National Master Plan (NMP) platform across all the States/UTs to sensitise the state officials about it. These workshops are designed for bringing more vigor and building synergy among the different stakeholders resulting in mutual learning among the States and Central Ministries/Departments. The first Regional Workshop for Central and Western Zone was organized on 20th February, 2023 in Goa. The second regional workshop with 9 States/UTs of the southern region, i.e., Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Andaman & Nicobar, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu, Lakshadweep and Puducherry, was organized on 10th & 11th March 2023 in Kochi, Kerala.

During the workshop, Ms. Sumita Dawra, Special Secretary, Logistics, DPIIT requested the States/UTs to interact with business associations and stakeholders on a regular basis to identify issues related to reducing logistics cost and bringing efficiency. She suggested that an inter-departmental services improvement group may be formed to address logistics related issues and action plans may be formulated for bringing down logistics cost duly identifying priority areas for taking up multimodal infrastructure related interventions. Mapping of freight flows in order to have a demand driven approach to logistics efficiency for the next 5-10 years, attracting private investments in

logistics related infrastructure and involving start-ups for solutions to promoting logistics efficiency were also mentioned in her remark. She also stressed upon the use of technology and green initiatives during planning of the logistics ecosystem including both planning for infrastructure development for new India and developing an efficient logistics ecosystem.

NMP is a transformative approach that enables integrated planning and synchronised implementation for multimodal and last mile connectivity across the country. It was launched by the Prime Minister on 13th October, 2021 with a vision to break departmental silos in Government and institutionalize holistic planning for stakeholders across major infrastructure projects.

On the first day of the Regional Workshop in Kochi, a demonstration of best use cases in using the NMP was made by the central Ministries. Experience, best practices and vision of using the NMP/SMP platform was shared by the 9 participating States/UTs.

On the second day of the Regional Workshop in Kochi, there were discussions on National Logistics Policy, state logistics policies, Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) and city logistics plan. For augmenting port connectivity and multimodality through PMGS, a presentation was made by the Cochin Port Authority followed by panel discussion with 4 major ports of Cochin, Kamarajar Vishakhapatnam and New Mangalore port. A

site visit to Kochi was also organized to study Port Connectivity and Coastal projects.

State/UT Logistics Policy has been notified by 18 states. Development of Logistics Ease Across Different State (LEADS) 2023-24 report has also commenced with the objective of analyzing the logistics ecosystem of various States/UTs as per a framework, and rank States/UTs on logistics ease. During the workshop, State and UTs also presented an overview of their Logistics Policy mentioning the following among other things:

Tamil Nadu presented a focus on reduction of cost of logistics for export-import as well as domestic trade in the State (expected to be reduced by 5 to 6%)

Karnataka presented its focus on improving the State's performance in logistics.

Andhra Pradesh highlighted their objective to address infrastructure gaps in logistics & supply chain and to promote trade from the East Coast

Telangana underlined its objective of developing a robust logistics ecosystem through MMLPs, Dry Ports, Cold storages etc.

Andaman and Nicobar Islands presented its focus on reducing logistics cost by enhancing efficiency by enabling multimodal connectivity

A panel discussion on port connectivity and multimodality was held towards the end of the workshop. The discussion covered port led industrialization, development of a large number of ports in Andhra Pradesh and focus on Telangana as a

major hinterland; for this both states need to work together for integrated development and coastal shipping as a major focus for Indian ports.

In continuation with the PM GatiShakti 'whole of government' approach and to complement the PM GatiShakti NMP, the National Logistics Policy (NLP) was launched to address the components of improving efficiency in services and human resource through streamlining processes, regulatory framework, skill development, mainstreaming logistics in higher education and adoption of suitable technologies.

The National Logistics Policy lays down an overarching interdisciplinary, cross-sectoral and multi-jurisdictional framework for the logistics sector and provides a comprehensive policy framework for all sub-sectors in the logistics ecosystem that are critical for efficient logistics.

The vision of the National Logistics Policy is to develop a technologically enabled, integrated, cost-efficient, resilient, sustainable and trusted logistics ecosystem in the country for accelerated and inclusive growth. Accordingly, broad targets for achieving the vision of NLP are to: (i) Reduce cost of logistics in India to be comparable to global benchmarks by 2030.; (ii) improve the Logistics Performance Index ranking - endeavour is to be among top 25 countries by 2030, and (iii) create data driven decision support mechanism for an efficient logistics ecosystem.

## India's first solutions-focused report for MSME delayed payments launched

Chennai, March 14 2023: The Delayed Payments Report 2.0 titled 'Imagining Solutions to Unlock Working Capital for MSMEs' by Global Alliance for Mass Entrepreneurship (GAME) and C2FO (Collaborative Cash Flow Optimization) was today released by the Chief Economic Advisor to the Government of India, Dr V Anantha Nageswaran.

The newly launched report is focused on addressing plausible solutions with three central pillars - Government and Policy Makers, Finance Enablers and Financiers, and Large Enterprises (including PSUs) for resolving Indian MSME's financial crisis, as well as focus on creating an additional 10 crore jobs by 2030.

The report was co-authored by C2FO and GAME with extensive discussions and inputs from Shri BB Swain and Shri Ajeet Singh of MSME Ministry, Shri Sharad Sharma, Co-founder, iSPIRIT, Shri Vivek Malhotra, Chief General Manager, SIDBI, Shri Anil Bhardwaj, Secretary General, FISME, Shri Adarsh Kumar, Senior Agribusiness Specialist with the Food and Agriculture Global Practice, World Bank and Shri Rajesh Kumar,

Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer, TransunionCIBIL.

Commenting on the report, Dr V Anantha Nageswaran, Chief Economic Advisor to the Government of India, said, "I am quite pleased with the fact that Global Alliance for Mass Entrepreneurship continues to focus on the issue of Delayed Payments that needs resolution. This is an issue that can only be tackled over time by maintaining a constant pressure. It is also an issue that remains to be resolved not only in India, but several countries across the globe. In India, the Government has been focusing on MSMEs since 2014. And hopefully over time, through some of the legislative and budgetary announcements, we can slowly bring about a mindset shift, not just in the private sector, but also in the public sector. And then, mechanisms and artificial interventions will no longer be necessary with prompt payment culture becoming embedded as part of normal large enterprise behaviour. In the 2023-24 budget, the government has made it clear that payments to MSME suppliers cannot be claimed on an accrual basis and cannot be set off against taxable

income unless the payment is actually made. That makes it clear that companies cannot have their cake and eat it too. Without a vibrant MSME sector, we cannot talk of India becoming a global economic power."

Ravi Venkatesan, Founder, Global Alliance for Mass Entrepreneurship (GAME), says, "Most MSMEs grapple with financial assistance, lack of mentoring support to scale the business, and technological obsolescence. Enterprises can become efficient and create more jobs if they have access to markets, finance & technology, and strategy to be competitive. Uninterrupted cash flow is a pre-requisite, and GAME's Delayed Payment 2.0 proposes a four-point solution to enable MSMEs to succeed, and the Indian economy continues to expand."

Alexander Kemper, Founder & CEO, C2FO, pointed out, "Delayed payments and the lack of formal financing can adversely impact a nation's potential to create jobs. While struggling to cope with payment delays, business owners are also under pressure due to long winded credit evaluation criteria and processes that limit their

access to loans. Through this report, we have suggested solutions that leverage the India stack (Account Aggregator, GST), simplify credit guarantee schemes, and create the right incentives for buyers and sellers to remediate this crippling issue."

The report serves as evidence of lakhs of businesses not being part of the formal economy, thereby never having had access to credit. The impact of delayed payments and the lack of formal financing has adversely impacted the nation's potential to create jobs, causes for which also include raised expenses creating further hurdles in conducting business. While struggling with payment delays, business owners are also pressured by non-representative and exclusive evaluation criteria limiting their access to loans.

The attempted efforts of the Government to introduce schemes and norms will be expected to encourage the credit flow as well as strengthen cash flow-based lending by simplifying credit guarantees, strengthening TReDS by integrating GST data, and re-imagining the process of dispute resolution for delayed payments.

## Mapping India's Growing Inclination Towards Health and Fitness – Flipkart Shares Latest Trends

Chennai, March 14 2023: Three months into 2023, people across the country continue to prioritise their mental and physical wellbeing to make healthier life choices. Flipkart, India's homegrown e-commerce marketplace shares some interesting trends that reflect what is on Indian consumers' mind at the start of the year.

Since 2020, the fashion category has witnessed a 30% growth in athleisure wear overall, while tracksuits alone have witnessed a 200% uptick in growth. The country's inclination towards living a healthier life led to categories such as fitness, personal care, athleisure and grooming to emerge as the most sought-after, for people across India. The fitness category witnessed a 10% YoY growth in

comparison to January 2022, while athleisure and activewear emerged as the new "closet essentials" with customers increasingly prioritising comfort and convenience at the core of their fashion choices.

Flipkart also launched a dedicated space for fitness enthusiasts on its app - the Sports Hub, in its endeavour to create a one-stop shop for all things active, enabling a convenient shopping experience for customers seeking a healthy way of life. The store recorded a growing demand for fitness accessories including Dumbbells, Yoga Mats, Gym Accessories, Shakers and Skipping Ropes. The demand for Cross-Trainers also grew by 20%.

Consumer adoption of the Virtual Try-On

and 3D Augmented Reality experiences grew by 13% and 25% respectively, which made shopping for athleisure a more interesting experience.

What customers are searching for:

The top-searched keywords on Flipkart through January and February 2023 included cycles, football, badminton, treadmills, dumbbells, t-shirts, shorts, hoodies, tracksuits, joggers and co-ord sets. Shoppers increasingly chose lycra as a preferred fabric and all-weather resistant sportswear. With the upcoming IPL season people on their toes, celebrity and team merchandise were observed to be some of the popular choices. Overall, the athleisure

segment witnessed a 30% year-on-year growth on Flipkart with homegrown brands topping the demand chart.

Brand love all the way:

International fitness brands emerged as popular choices owing to their expansive product portfolios and quirky collaborations. Among Indian brands, celebrity owned merchandise witnessed heightened demand which were leveraged through technological innovations like live commerce and interactive launches on the platform. Moreover, Tier 3 cities in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar clocked the highest demand followed by metros amongst growing brand consciousness across India.

## HPCL and Chevron partner to introduce cutting-edge technology lubricants in India

Chennai, March 14 2023: Chevron Brands International LLC (Chevron), a subsidiary of Chevron Corporation, has entered into a long-term trademark licensing agreement with Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL). This collaboration encompasses the licensing, production, distribution, and marketing of Chevron's lubricant products under the Caltex® brand, including Chevron's proprietary Havoline®

and Delo® branded lubricant products.

This Agreement paves the way for Caltex-branded lubricants to be manufactured, distributed, and marketed in India by HPCL. Consumers in India can look forward to the supply of quality Caltex lubricants under this development.

Commenting on the agreement, Brant Fish, President of Chevron International Products stated, "We are extremely pleased to partner with HPCL to bring quality

Caltex lubricants technology and performance to India. HPCL is a market leader in India, and together we plan to build on the strength of the Caltex brand and our premium product portfolio. We look forward to a long and successful partnership with HPCL to complement their product offerings with Caltex's premium Havoline® and Delo® products in India."

From his side, Amit Garg, Director Marketing of HPCL added, "This exciting partnership

paves the way to leverage HPCL's market leadership to add value via a broader, premium products offering to Indian consumers through synergies between HPCL and Chevron. The long-term cooperative we have with Chevron is built on HPCL's success in the field of lubricants production, distribution, and marketing. We look forward to a fruitful and long-lasting journey with the Caltex brand in the Indian market."

## CITI NAMED BANK OF THE YEAR IN ASIA PACIFIC

Chennai, March 14 2023: Hong Kong: Citi was recently recognized as 'Bank of the Year' in Asia Pacific at the International Financing Review (IFR) Asia Awards 2022 based on a unanimous decision of the editors of IFR Asia, a leading industry magazine with a focus on capital markets.

Citi was also named 'Best Bond House' in Asia Pacific for its ability to bring Asian issuers to the G3 market throughout the year against a backdrop of new geopolitical headwinds and rising interest rates, according to IFR Asia.

The independent recognitions from IFR Asia, reaffirms the expertise and solution-driven approach of Citi's capital markets and

advisory teams in developing and executing complex transactions for clients in an ever-changing and challenging macro-environment. "Citi's pan-Asian footprint and diverse sector coverage made it a bastion of stability, while its commercial bank enabled it to give issuers more options in rapidly changing market conditions," concluded IFR Asia in the editorial write up accompanying the award win.

"This win is a recognition of the strength of Citi's franchise, the competitive advantage of our global network and the passion and energy of our teams. We would like to thank our clients for their trust in Citi, and for choosing us as their partner to support their

banking requirements," said Jan Metzger, Head of Asia Pacific banking, capital markets and advisory at Citi.

During the last year, Citi helped raise over US\$200bn for Asian clients from global capital markets. Citi led transactions also won awards including the following:

? Reliance Industries US\$4bn multi-tranche bond Best Investment Grade Bond

? Lenovo US\$675m seven-year CB Best Structured equity issue

? LG Energy Solution's W12.8tr IPO South Korea capital markets deal

? Thai Life Insurance Bt37bn IPO Thailand capital markets

deal In the write Ups accompanying the award wins, the editorial said:

"Citigroup, in contrast to many of its peers, did more than just stand its ground in 2022. The bank was proactive as it consistently found market windows for its clients and supported them as they sought the best possible funding opportunities."

"Issuers in Asia were faced in 2022 with volatile capital markets that were inclined to close at a moment's notice, but Citigroup provided the stability clients needed to manage their funding plans."

"Issuers could not rely on Asia-only demand in 2022, but Citi connected them to international investors."

## Adfactors PR wins the Public Relations' Premier Cricket League 2023 (PRPCL)

Mumbai, March 14 2023: The Cricket team of India's largest PR consultancy firm, Adfactors United emerged winners of the Public Relations' Premier Cricket League (PRPCL) 2023, West Edition, organized by the Public Relations Consultants Association of India (PRCAI) on 11th March 2023 at Khar Gymkhana, Mumbai.

In the first match of the tournament, Adfactors United set a new record in the history of PRPCL, by scoring 131 runs in just six overs. The team entered finals with a positive net run rate of +4.77 and also, maintained the highest net run rate throughout the tournament with a difference of +2.



Satveer Khairaliya, who scored 248 runs overall, was declared the Man of the Series while also receiving 2 Man of the Match awards. Sushil Mhadgut also picked up the Man of the Match title, while Karthik Bangera was awarded the Fighter of the Match in the semifinals.

Commenting on the win, Nijay N. Nair, CEO, Adfactors PR, said, "For us, sports is

very deeply integrated into the cultural fabric of Adfactors PR. Be it our internal development programs or our representation in all industry-level competitions, we take the sportsperson spirit seriously. To bring the trophy home fills our hearts with pride and joy. We will continue to support our people to pursue sports just as they pursue work - with focused effort, love, and perseverance."

Expressing his delight, Omkar Jalgoankar, Captain of Adfactors United, said, "It is a proud moment for Adfactors PR and for all of us to win the PRPCL trophy. Our team put in a lot of hard work and effort to reach this stage, and it is an incredible feeling to emerge as winners."

The PRPCL was an exciting event that brought together India's best PR firms from the west region and showcased their cricketing talents. Adfactors United's victory is a testament to their teamwork, dedication, and passion for cricket. The team is already looking forward to defending their title next year.

## DBS FOUNDATION PARTNERS WITH HAQDARSHAK TO ENHANCE FINANCIAL LITERACY FOR MARGINALISED COMMUNITIES

Chennai, March 14 2023: DBS Foundation has partnered with Haqdarshak Empowerment Solutions (HESPL) to undertake a social protection and financial literacy programme aimed at marginalised citizens across India, including daily wage earners, domestic workers, farm workers, sanitation workers, micro-entrepreneurs. The programme will educate 2,00,000 beneficiaries (70% women) to build their digital and financial capacity to access relevant government entitlements and private financial services.

The programme is being implemented in 10 districts in Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, and Telangana, targeting some of the most vulnerable populations in these areas. The initiative's ultimate aim is to establish a basic social safety net for these citizens and empower them with digital and financial training to take charge of their lives and households.

Under this initiative, a brick-and-mortar centre called a Yojana Kendra will be established in select communities. Women agents will be identified and trained as Haqdarshaks to serve and support the community. This agent cadre will mobilise potential beneficiaries, from low-income families i.e. those with minimal access to social protection and financial services.

The support agents will conduct financial literacy training camps using audio-visual tools

and easy-to-understand content in local languages. Beneficiaries will be screened with the Haqdarshak mobile app to determine their eligibility for welfare programs and the agent will provide end-to-end support to fill forms, collect documents, and register beneficiaries under social protection programmes. A helpline will be available for any queries or grievance redressal. The programme will be executed by 400 support agents, and there will be one supervisor for every 40 agents.

The financial literacy rate among Indian adults is the lowest compared to other major emerging economies, with only 24% being financially literate, according to a report by the Global Financial Literacy Excellence Center. This disparity is attributed to a need for formal training and awareness, as well as inter-state differences. Access to social welfare and financial inclusion services at the last mile is a critical challenge. According to a 2017 World Bank study, only 40 per cent of Indians can apply for government services as they cannot afford the time and money to access them. The collaboration comes at a crucial time when marginalised communities continue to grapple with the economic impact in the wake of the pandemic.

Shoma Narayanan, Managing Director, Group Strategic Marketing & Communications, DBS Bank India, said, "As a socially responsible bank, we recognise the need to create impact

beyond banking and to encourage solutions for a more inclusive world. Our partnership with Haqdarshak is a concerted effort to empower marginalised communities, particularly women, by providing them access to social welfare and financial tools, which will increase self-sufficiency and give them agency over their lives. We are also proud of Haqdarshak, which has scaled significantly as a Business for Good under the DBS Foundation's Grant Programme, and shares our purpose to build a better future."

Aniket Doegar, Founder & CEO, Haqdarshak, commented on the partnership, saying, "DBS Foundation has been an early partner of ours since 2018. They have always put impact at the forefront and supported us, whether it was when Haqdarshak was a young organisation, through the pandemic, or now, as we have achieved scale. For us at Haqdarshak, this is our largest project so far. We are excited about our impact footprint — we will be touching the lives of 2,00,000 citizens, majority of them women, across disadvantaged sections of the community via digital and financial literacy training and by linking them to relevant welfare entitlements. We are grateful to the DBS Foundation for collaborating with us on this important program. We hope to grow our partnership manifold in the years to come."

Haqdarshak aims to improve the lives of citizens and MSMEs by

leveraging technology solutions to provide access to government welfare and financial services. With an extensive database of 7000+ state and central welfare schemes, available in 11 Indian languages through web and mobile channels, Haqdarshak offers features such as beneficiary onboarding, a customisable eligibility engine, and an end-to-end application workflow.

In 2018, as an early-stage venture, Haqdarshak received DBS Foundation's Social Enterprise Grant for their digital platform. Again in 2020, in response to the pandemic, DBS Foundation reinforced its commitment to supporting social enterprises by awarding all its past grantees the Business Transformation and Improvement (BTI) Grant, empowering them to continue during an exceptionally difficult year. Haqdarshak utilised this grant to serve its beneficiaries and the wider MSME community through a new platform providing access to government-assisted schemes for registrations, documentation, and financing applications.

Earlier this year, DBS bank committed an additional SGD 100 million to further its efforts to improve lives in Asia. This would allow the bank and DBS Foundation to boost their support for purpose-driven businesses and contribute towards finding solutions to the region's increasingly pressing societal issues.

## Beej Network to invest over \$3 Mn in 24 Early stage startups in 2023

Chennai, March 14 2023: Angel Investing firm, Beej network, announced its plan to invest 24 cr (over \$3 Mn) in 24 early-stage startups by the end of this year 2023. Beej Network provides financial aid to qualified startups through integrated resources. This in turn fills the gap in the financial early-stage funding ecosystem.

The co-founders Nikhil Jain, Nikhil Sethia, K.V.T. Ramesh, and P.S. Suman decided to establish Beej Network 6 months ago after living the experience of Angel

investing for more than 4 years with a portfolio of 60+ startups. Beej has built an investor base of over 400 investors with 10 Startups in their portfolio.

"We started Beej Network with one goal, to bring leverage to revolutionary startups. Our focus is towards building a high-value generating ecosystem," said co-founder of Beej Network, Nikhil Jain, upon asking why they established the network. Beej's Angel Network is building a bridge that facilitates big-ticket investments for high-growth startups. At the

same time, they also encourage first-gen investors new to the idea of startup investing by welcoming investments as low as INR 3 Lakhs.

"At Beej, we have various rounds of assessments before we decide to fund a startup. We follow a Sector Agnostic approach keeping the quality of the startup as the primary criterion of evaluation. We pay attention to the founding team, their experience, and hunger—that's 40% of our due diligence. Other than that, we look at the

scalability- if they are capable of making a dent in the market. Most importantly we figure out a successful exit plan for our investors." Nikhil Jain mentioned.

Beej Network takes pride in investing in startups like Chaiwaale, Swytchd mobility, Mr.Med, Crib, and many more startups. Beej is also planning to launch its CAT 1 Angel AIF soon. This AIF will work as a FAAS (Funding as a Service) as well. Along with the FAAS, they will also be launching their PAAS (Platform as a Service).

## Cultural festival - 'Kalaisangamam' celebrated at A. M. Jain College



Agurchand Manmull Jain College in Meenambakkam, Chennai celebrated their intra college cultural festival, Kalaisangamam on 11th of March. Many students from various departments participated in the cultural fest which included music, dance and variety. College Secretary, Mr. Udhan Kumar Chordia with the committee member Mr. Panna Lal Chordia, Mr. Bhavnes Deora, College Principal Dr. M. Venkataraman and Dean Dr. M.M Ramya were the chief guest of the event. Around 5,000 people including students and staff attended the cultural fest. Students of the BBA department bagged the overall championship of the event.