

Dharmendra Pradhan and Australian Education Minister, Jason Clare, MP, announce opening of two Australian Universities in GIFT City Foreign University campuses at home to facilitate Study In India in line with NEP 2020 - Dharmendra Pradhan

Chennai, Nov 07 2023: Union Minister for Education and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship Shri Dharmendra Pradhan along with his Australian counterpart, Hon'ble Jason Clare, MP, Government of Australia, today visited the site for the upcoming campuses of Wollongong and Deakin Universities at GIFT City, Gandhinagar. They were briefed on the developments of the campus and future plans.

The Ministers attended an event, Arambh (The Beginning), formally announcing the opening of campuses at the GIFT City. Opening up of foreign universities on Indian soil is in line with the Nation Education Policy 2020's vision of the internationalization of education. Arambh celebrated a significant milestone in the international educational landscape, bringing together eminent dignitaries, ministers, and academic leaders to mark the commencement of Australian university campuses in India.

The Vice-Chancellors of Deakin University and Wollongong stressed the importance of country-to-country partnerships, highlighting the significant growth in bilateral relations between India and Australia, even during challenging times such as the COVID-19 pandemic. They shared the future plans including the scheduled start of courses with opening up of the campuses in India.



Speaking on the occasion, Shri Pradhan congratulated the student and academic fraternity on a new 'Arambh'. He said that Foreign University campuses at home will facilitate Study In India and also create a vibrant, diverse and inclusive educational environment as envisioned in the NEP 2020.

Shri Pradhan mentioned that opening up the campus of these two universities in the GIFT City—the land of opportunities—is a 'Gift' to the student community. He expressed his gratitude to Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for his vision and efforts to transform India's education through the NEP 2020. He also said that students and faculty from different parts of the world will collaborate, learn, and grow together with such efforts.

Internationalization at Home', aiming to create a vibrant, diverse, and inclusive educational environment within our own country, he added. In the afternoon, both the Ministers addressed a conclave 'Research Dialogue: New Horizons in Research Collaboration'. The aim of the conclave was to identify innovative opportunities for deepening bilateral collaboration in a thriving research ecosystem. Australian delegation, senior representatives of key Indian higher education institutions, and other dignitaries were also present at the conclave. Shri Pradhan spoke at the 'Research Dialogue', exhorting University leaders and researchers to catalyse new opportunities for deepening bilateral research collaborations between India and Australia. Research has to be a priority area for the larger benefit of society; both Australia and India are committed to promote research for mutual prosperity and global well-being, he added. Both the Ministers met with academicians and industry leaders on Industry Education Partnerships where discussions were held on strengthening education-industry connections, benefiting industry through university partnerships, R&D collaboration etc.

IREDA Launches CSR Portal to Improve Transparency in CSR Initiatives

Chennai, Nov 07 2023: Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA), a Mini Ratna (Category - I) Government of India enterprise under the administrative control of Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, has launched a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) portal for enhancing transparency in its CSR initiatives. The portal will facilitate transparency in receipt and disposal of CSR requests from various organizations and institutions. It will be accessible to all 24x7, with a CSR policy and proposal checklist for examination of CSR requests. The portal will also contribute to the more efficient execution of IREDA's social welfare initiatives as part of its CSR efforts, making them readily available to the public. Developed by IREDA's IT team, the portal can be easily accessed here: <https://onlinela.ireda.in/OnlineCSR/>

The portal was launched during the valedictory function of "Vigilance Awareness Week 2023", held at the company's registered office in Delhi. Dr. Praveen Kumari Singh, Additional Secretary, Central Vigilance Commission (CVC), launched the CSR portal in the august presence of Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of IREDA Shri Pradip Kumar Das; Chief Vigilance Officer, Shri Ajay Kumar Sahani, and other senior officials.

A group of people sitting at a table during the valedictory function of "Vigilance Awareness Week 2023", held at the company's registered office in Delhi. Dr. Praveen Kumari Singh, Additional Secretary, Central Vigilance Commission (CVC), launched the CSR portal in the august presence of Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of IREDA Shri Pradip Kumar Das; Chief Vigilance Officer, Shri Ajay Kumar Sahani, and other senior officials.



undertaken by IREDA in 2021, of launching the Whistle Blower Portal, which automatically generated additional insights for promoting vigilance and integrity within organizations. She applauded the unique initiative

combating climate change. CMD, IREDA expressed the company's unwavering commitment to advancing renewable energy and Corporate Social Responsibility while upholding the values of transparency and ethics. He emphasized that the newly introduced CSR portal symbolizes its resolute dedication to these guiding principles, promoting a paperless approach and unwavering determination to better serve communities and stakeholders. IREDA organized various competitions during 'Vigilance Awareness Week 2023' (30th October to 5th November 2023), and prizes were distributed to the winners at the valedictory function.

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Happy 69th Birthday, Kamal Haasan: A Look at His 10 Highest-Rated Movies on IMDb

Chennai, Nov 07 2023: Having over six decades of experience in the Indian Film Industry, Kamal Haasan debuted as a child artist in the 1960 Tamil film Kalathur Kannamma for which he won the President's Golden Medal. He went on to star in notable films including Sagara Sangamam, Indian, Gunaa, Vishwaroopam and Vikram, amongst others. In 2014, he was honored with the Padma Bhushan award for his contribution to Indian cinema. Kamal Haasan will next be seen in Kalki 2989 AD alongside



Prabhas, Amitabh Bachchan, Deepika Padukone, and Disha Patani. Here are Kamal Haasan's top 10 highest-rated titles on IMDb:

1. S a g a r a Sangamam - 8.8
2. Thevar Magan - 8.7
3. Nayakan - 8.6
4. Anbe Sivam - 8.6
5. Mahanadi - 8.6
6. P u s h p a k a Vimana - 8.6
7. Moondram Pirai - 8.6
8. Kuruthipunal - 8.6
9. Michael Madana Kama Rajan - 8.5
10. Swathi Muthyam - 8.5

HP launches 'Walk to The Light' campaign to adopt 'digital education' this Diwali

Chennai, Nov 07 2023: HP India today released its Diwali campaign 'Walk to The Light', an inspiring story about an elderly couple stepping into the digital world for a better future. It highlights the journey of small businesses, emphasizing the power of digital education in today's fast-changing world.



The campaign is inspired by the strong spirit of small businesses in India. It encapsulates their remarkable journey towards digitalization, shedding light on the role of digital education for success in the new economy. The story is a celebration of the entrepreneurial spirit, emphasizing how Diwali marks the time for fresh start and new learnings. With this campaign, HP is encouraging the small businesses and larger community to learn new skills on the auspicious occasion of Diwali.

The story follows 'Sajan Handicrafts', a

small shop facing tough competition. Janaki, the determined woman managing the store, finds hope in the form of a young girl named Lakshmi. Lakshmi steps in to help Janaki by teaching her the process of digitalizing the store, including digital inventory management, store discovery, and brand building, all facilitated by the power of a HP PC. On the auspicious occasion of Diwali, Janaki surprises her husband, Santosh, by revealing their newfound digital presence, bringing immense joy to their lives.

Commenting on the launch of the film, Mr. Prashant Jain, CMO, HP India, said, "Technology

adoption by a small business can transform its operations. The 'Walk to The Light' campaign is inspired by the remarkable journey small businesses in India are taking to grow their businesses. This initiative underscores HP's unwavering commitment to supporting these businesses & individuals. For us, this campaign is not just a story; it's a celebration of digital capabilities revolutionising the local business ecosystem in India."

The film, released in seven languages, highlights HP's dedication to empowering small businesses through

digital initiatives. It underscores HP's Connect initiative, spotlighting the transformative power of digital education and its impact on entrepreneurs.

The film also showcases HP India's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. These initiatives, aimed at making a tangible difference, include digital education programs, skill-building courses, and community outreach efforts. HP's CSR work stands as a testament to the brand's dedication to creating a positive impact on society. Through various interventions, HP has positively impacted the lives of over 35 Lakh Indians in the last 5 years, reflecting the brand's commitment to social progress and economic empowerment.

The creative agency for the film was Simple Creative Inc., while Media Monks served as the production company.

Swiggy Introduces Industry First Innovative AI-Fuelled Photoshoot Feature to Elevate Restaurant Menus

Chennai, Nov 07 2023: In today's fast-paced digital landscape, where first impressions are formed in the blink of an eye, the visual appeal of a restaurant's menu plays a pivotal role in attracting customers and driving sales. Understanding the power of high-quality food images, Swiggy, India's leading on-demand convenience platform, has introduced an industry-first AI-powered 'Photoshoot' feature for its restaurant partners. This feature empowers restaurant owners to enhance their menu offerings and entice diners with mouthwatering visuals.

The AI Photoshoot feature simplifies the process of capturing and enhancing high-quality images for menu items. Restaurant owners can easily use their smartphones and the



Swiggy Owner app to complete this task efficiently. The 'AI-Powered Image Validation' ensures that the images adhere to Swiggy's guidelines, making the process hassle-free and efficient. Additionally, the 'AI Image Enhancement' feature takes food photography to the next level by improving image quality, enhancing aesthetics, and even offering the ability to change backgrounds.

One of the standout

benefits is the speed at which these images become available on the Swiggy platform, typically within just a few hours. This quick turnaround can lead to a significant increase in orders, with high-quality menu images shown to potentially boost orders by up to fivefold. Additionally, restaurant owners can enjoy substantial cost savings, as there's no longer a need for expensive professional photoshoots.

Rohit Kapoor, CEO of

Swiggy's Food Marketplace, stated, "High-quality food photos are essential for creating a profitable menu. They assist customers in making informed choices and improve their overall ordering experience. Swiggy's 'AI-enabled Photoshoot Feature' simplifies the process, eliminating the need for costly photographers. We hope restaurant partners and owners will take full advantage of this offering."

In just one month since its launch, approximately 10,000 restaurants across India have enthusiastically adopted this groundbreaking feature. With the capability to effortlessly capture and upload stunning menu images at no additional cost, restaurant partners can now captivate more customers and watch their orders soar.

Chennai Beach - Chennai Egmore 4th line project is advancing steadily

Chennai, Nov 07 2023: The Chennai Beach - Chennai Egmore 4th line project is a significant infrastructure project aimed at enhancing the operational efficiency of Chennai city's rail network and facilitating the introduction of additional passenger and freight services. The project, covering the distance of 4.30 Km. Between Chennai Beach and Chennai Egmore, is carried out at a cost of Rs.279 Crores. The construction works are in full swing. MRTS services between Chennai Beach and Chintadripet have been temporarily suspended to facilitate this crucial infrastructure project.

Works completed recently

1 Working permission in the Defence Land has been obtained

1 Dismantling of tracks to facilitate the movement of machineries has been completed

1 Madras Medical



College land has been acquired and construction of boundary wall has been completed

1 For laying of 4th line, part of the PARK TOWN station building has to be dismantled and the work of demolition has been completed.

1 As major portion of track passes along the Cooum river, the bank has been protected with secant pile. Piling work along the Cooum River bank has been completed with 497 out of 651 piles being laid

1 3 out of 8 minor bridges along the Buckingham canal has been completed

Works in progress

1 Foundation work is in progress for Major Bridge across the

Buckingham canal

1 Driving of piles for boundary wall is in progress near the defence land

1 Retaining wall between Chennai Egmore and Chennai Park station is nearing completion

1 Platform Dismantling work at CHENNAI FORT, PARK TOWN and CHENNAI PARK stations near the running track is nearing completion

1 Construction of new Platform works is in full swing at CHENNAI FORT station

1 Collection of PSC sleepers and ballast for track is in progress

Benefits of the Project:

1 The completion of

this project will enable increased frequency for long-distance and freight trains

1 The 4th line is pivotal for expanding services from Chennai Egmore and Tambaram terminal thus enhancing connectivity in the region.

1 Upon completion, the 4th line between Chennai Beach and Chennai Egmore will significantly enhance the railway infrastructure, decongest existing lines, and bolster the operational efficiency of the Chennai suburban rail network.

Challenges Faced:

The Railway faces resistance from the RBI regarding the acquisition of a portion of land crucial for the 4th line between Chennai Beach and Chennai Egmore. Consequently, this may restrict the development to a single line for MRTS trains between Beach and Fort until Park Town due to the land constraint.

D2C companies move over e-commerce market places, ride on "Unbundling of E-commerce"

Chennai, Nov 07 2023: India is witnessing a shift of Direct-to-Consumer (D2C) companies from large e-commerce marketplaces to individual service providers across the value chain. From developing the platform (website and apps) to driving discovery through social media and partnering with Checkout network providers to provide a seamless payment experience, D2C companies are looking beyond large e-commerce marketplaces to establish their brands. This is a part of the larger "Unbundling of E-commerce" trend unfolding in India.

While D2C companies were able to get pan-India market access and become profitable courtesy the e-commerce marketplaces, they were unable to build a direct relationship with the consumers and also had to face high commissions. This is being addressed by the 'Unbundling of E-commerce' where D2C brands can choose the platform, logistics and checkout network provider of their choice

at significantly lower costs than marketplaces.

Brands such as Boul Audio, Hammer, Gizmore, Corseca and Organic India, who began by selling their products through e-commerce marketplaces, have started serving customers through their own platforms as well. According to consulting firm KPMG, the Indian D2C market currently stands at approximately \$12 billion in 2022 and is projected to cross \$60 billion by 2027, growing at a CAGR of 40 percent.

"As D2C brands come out of the shadows of the large e-commerce marketplaces, offering a checkout experience similar to these marketplaces becomes important to reduce friction in customer journey. At Simpl, we have built a Merchant First Checkout Network integrated with our revolutionary 1-tap pay which enables a seamless payment experience and customers can also view the status of their shipment like they experience on large marketplaces. This

becomes important to ensure the brand constantly receives repeat customers which is essential for its success," said Nitya Sharma, Founder and CEO of Simpl.

Currently, over 26,000 small and large merchants including D2C brands and over 50 lakh active customers use Simpl's 1-tap pay and Checkout Network across the country.

"At the Bear House, we continuously seek exceptional partners to foster long-term business associations. Simpl was one such fortunate addition we made at an early stage, and our journey with them has been nothing short of phenomenal. The results we achieved through our partnership with Simpl surpassed all expectations. With their support and expertise, we experienced an outstanding 12.7X Return on Investment (ROI) and our website Conversion increased by 30%, reflecting the impact of our collaborative efforts on customer behavior. A pivotal aspect of our success story with Simpl was the remarkable increase in

prepaid orders by 22% and a 6% reduction of RTO orders (Return to origin). One of the key pillars that set Simpl apart was their exceptional customer support. Their dedicated team was always responsive, proactive, and solution-oriented, making them an ideal partner for Direct-to-Consumer (D2C) companies like ours. With utmost confidence, I recommend Simpl to all of you who aspire to accelerate the growth of your brand and enhance the seamless customer journey" said Harsh Somaiya, The Bear House.

Apart from offering a seamless checkout experience, there are multiple other pain points of emerging D2C brands that need to be solved such as easy access to credit, lack of marketing and legal support among others. Simpl through its D2C Simplified initiative is driving several community efforts to empower the D2C ecosystem and has partnered with nearly a dozen companies over the last 1 year such as Klub, Adyogi and Zolvit to provide support to the ecosystem.

Ikodoo Launches the New and Improved Buds Z Neo Following the Success of Buds One and Buds Z

Chennai, Nov 07 2023: Ikodoo, a dynamic and innovative technology brand, has unveiled its latest offering, the Ikodoo Buds Z Neo, following the successful launches of the Buds One and Buds Z. The new addition to the Ikodoo product line is poised to elevate the audio experience for customers, building upon the company's commitment to meet evolving consumer demands.



The Buds Z Neo with the Vifa Sound technology presents an array of impressive features, including extended battery life for prolonged usage and fast-charging capabilities, ensuring uninterrupted connectivity. The Buds Z Neo's 10mm PEEK+PU dynamic driver guarantees immersive, extra bass while maintaining the

original sound of the music. Powered by Bluetooth 5.3, these headphones offer a stable and low-latency audio experience within 10 meters, making them compatible with Android, Windows, and iOS devices. It boasts an IPX4 water resistance rating, adding durability and versatility, making it suitable for a wide range

Pavneet Singh, CEO, Ikodoo, expressed the company's enthusiasm, stating, "We are excited to introduce the Ikodoo Buds Z Neo to our customers. This product promises to redefine the audio experience, offering exceptional sound quality, extended performance, and advanced features. We eagerly anticipate the positive response from our customers and remain dedicated to surpassing their expectations with our product offerings."

The Ikodoo Buds Z Neo is available in three stylish colors: Black, Green, and White, allowing customers to choose an option that complements their style. With a competitive price of just 2999 rupees, Ikodoo maintains its commitment to providing high-quality audio solutions at an affordable price point.

SNAP CELEBRATES AUGMENTED REALITY AT INAUGURAL APAC AR DAY

Chennai, Nov 07 2023: Today Snap Inc. hosted its inaugural APAC AR Day in Mumbai, India, celebrating Snapchat's leadership in Augmented Reality (AR), its thriving AR creator and developer community, and the company's ongoing commitment to democratising AR for users and brands.

The event saw Evan Spiegel, Snap CEO and Co-Founder, engage in a candid fireside chat with Snap APAC President Ajit Mohan as a part of Spiegel's three-day trip to India. The discussion centered around the adoption of AR globally by consumers and brands, India's booming creative talent pool, the future of AR, and Snap's innovative approach to this transformative technology.

"I love the energy of the young and vibrant Indian developer community. With over 200 million Snapchatters in India, we're seeing more and more creators, developers and brands tap into our community's passion for augmented reality experiences. We're excited to be building the future with such incredible local talent," said Evan Spiegel, Snap Inc. CEO and Co-Founder.

Ajit Mohan also delivered a keynote address that



emphasized the strength of India's thriving AR creator and developer community and their innovative collaborations with brand partners.

Highlighting the hyper growth of the AR creator community in India, Ajit Mohan, President, APAC, Snap Inc. said, "Thanks to the innovation and creativity of these incredibly talented AR developers and creators, Snapchatters around the world are able to engage with immersive AR experiences which bring everyday moments to life. Snapchat is deeply committed to empowering these creators, offering monetization avenues and providing innovative tools to support their creative aspirations. We are honoured to have had creators from all over India and across APAC attend Snap's AR Day to celebrate this ongoing innovation."

The event saw AR developers, creators, advertisers, brands, and content creators attend sessions led by expert speakers including Ty Ahmad-Taylor, Snap's VP Product Growth, Resh Sidhu, Global Director Arcadia, Snap's AR Creative Studio, Haran Ramachandran, Snap's APAC Head of Creative Strategy, and Jeremy Voss, Snap's Director of Product. Through these engaging sessions, attendees were able to learn about Snap's latest AR innovations and engage with interactive AR try-On stations.

Building Businesses with Snap AR

With over 250 million people engaging with AR on Snapchat daily on average, Indian AR developers are building strong businesses on the platform. The Snap AR creator community in India grew by 60% in 2022, and given the positive trends, will continue to grow with talented AR creators from all walks of life in 2024 as well.

One such creator is Vivek Thakur, who began his academic journey in medicine but switched to microbiology due to

financial constraints. It was during his college years that he discovered the immersive world of augmented reality, creating the immensely popular "Smoke Flare" Lens which was a global viral Lens that generated over 10 billion impressions on Snapchat. Vivek is now a successful AR developer who collaborates with renowned brands such as Coca-Cola as well as creating custom Lenses found on Snapchat.

Emphasizing the opportunities that are paving new revenue streams for AR creators, Vivek Thakur, Snap Lens Network member, said, "AR Lenses have gained immense popularity in India as they encourage visual expression. Snap is empowering creators and developers like myself by providing us with creative tools and opportunities to generate revenue through Lens creation. Even for creators without coding backgrounds, by using Snapchat's Lens Studio, which is incredibly intuitive, they can build careers and strong communities."

In August this year, Snap launched the Lens Creator Rewards program, a new way for Snap AR creators, Lens developers, and teams to get rewarded for building top-performing Lenses on Snapchat.

A.M. Jain College partnership with Buddha Academy



A.M. Jain College is thrilled to announce a strategic partnership with Buddha Academy to provide comprehensive examination training right at the college campus. Students will now have the unique opportunity to receive top-notch coaching for UPSC, Civil Services, TNPSC, Banking, RRB, and other relevant government exams.

Kotak Mahindra Bank and Zurich Insurance Group Announce Strategic Alliance

Chennai, Nov 07 2023: Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited ("Bank"), Kotak Mahindra General Insurance Company Limited ("Kotak General Insurance") and Zurich Insurance Company Limited ("Zurich") have entered into definitive agreements for a transaction whereby Zurich will invest (approximately) Rs 4,051 crore to acquire a 51% stake in Kotak General Insurance through a combination of fresh growth capital and share purchase. Further, Zurich will acquire an additional stake of 19% within a period of three years from its initial acquisition ("Transaction"). Zurich's investment represents the single largest investment by a global strategic insurer in an Indian non-life insurer.

Dipak Gupta, MD & CEO, Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited said, "The alliance brings together two trusted and respected brands. The combined expertise and resources of the respective firms will enable us to provide innovative solutions to meet the evolving needs of our customers. Kotak Mahindra Group's pan-India 'phygital' distribution presence and Zurich's distinct global capabilities in digital assets, B2B and B2C formats has potential to create a transformational 'digital' impact for the Kotak General Insurance franchise delivering innovation efficiently and rapidly in the Indian general insurance space."

Tulsi Naidu, CEO Asia Pacific, Zurich Insurance Company Limited said, "India is one of the world's

most important markets with immense potential and we are pleased to be making a significant commitment with an excellent partner. With Kotak Mahindra Group's high-quality franchise and expertise in Indian financial services, and Zurich's deep distribution experience and class-leading capabilities in retail and commercial insurance, we are confident this partnership can bring strong innovation, know-how, and excellent customer experiences to the Indian general insurance market."

Gaurang Shah, Chairman, Kotak Mahindra General Insurance Company Limited said, "Over the 8 years since inception, Kotak General Insurance has invested to create a multi-product franchise with very strong

fundamental building blocks. The alliance marks a significant step forward in further implementing our strategy to deepen insurance penetration in India with an appropriate combination of technology, scale and a tangible commitment to the customer. Zurich, a premier global insurer, with its deep global relationships, robust capabilities in complex risk and successful track-record of long-term alliances will help Kotak General Insurance grow rapidly and deliver exceptional value to our customers."

The Transaction is subject to customary conditions precedent including regulatory approvals from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India, and the Competition Commission of India.

Aditya Birla Capital Ltd (ABCL) – Q2 FY24 results

Chennai, Nov 07 2023: Aditya Birla Capital Limited ("The Company") announced its unaudited financial results for the quarter and half year ended September 30, 2023.

The Consolidated Revenue of the Company grew by 22% year-on-year to ` 8,831 Crore in Q2 FY24. The Consolidated Profit after tax grew 44% year-on-year to ` 705 Crore in Q2 FY24. The strong momentum across businesses led to a 41% year-on-year and 8% sequential growth in the overall lending portfolio (NBFC and HFC) to ` 1,08,961 Crore as on September 30, 2023. The total AUM (AMC, life insurance and health insurance) grew by 12% year-on-year to ` 4,04,354 Crore.

The Company has a pan-India presence with 1,403 branches across all businesses as of September 30, 2023. The

Company's branch expansion is targeted at driving penetration into tier 3 and tier 4 towns and new customer segments.

The Company follows a 'Digital First Approach' for product innovation, direct acquisition, seamless onboarding and service delivery. In H1 FY24, ~ 78% customers were onboarded digitally in the AMC business. In life insurance, ~ 80% renewals were done digitally in H1 FY24. In Health Insurance business, ~ 85% business is delivered by auto-underwriting.

The Company continues to see a robust response to its comprehensive B2B platform for MSME ecosystem, Udyog Plus, with more than 164,000 registrations as of September 30, 2023. It offers paperless digital journey for business loans and loan disbursement of upto ` 10

lakh. The Company has integrated Udyog Plus with ABG ecosystem to provide channel financing to dealers. Udyog Plus has reached a monthly disbursement run rate of ~ ` 50 crore with ABG ecosystem contributing two-thirds of the business.

Highlights of NBFC business for Q2 FY24

- Disbursements grew by 32% year-on-year to ` 16,477 Crore
- Loan portfolio grew by 44% year-on-year and 9% sequentially to ` 93,522 Crore
- Net interest margin (NIM) expanded by 16 basis points year-on-year to 6.87%
- Profit before tax grew by 51% year-on-year and 7% sequentially to ` 736 Crore
- Return on assets increased by 10 basis points year-on-year to 2.51%
- Return on

equity grew by 424 basis points year-on-year to 18%

Gross stage 2 and 3 assets declined by 326 basis points year-on-year and 22 basis points sequentially to 5.24%

Highlights of Housing Finance business for Q2 FY24

- Disbursements grew by 52% year-on-year to ` 1,882 Crore
- Loan book grew by 23% year-on-year and 6% sequentially to ` 15,439 Crore
- Profit before tax grew by 28% year-on-year to ` 97 Crore
- Return on assets grew by 9 basis points year-on-year to 2.03%
- Return on equity grew by 144 basis points to 14.5%
- Gross stage 2 and 3 assets declined by 390 basis points year-on-year and 38 basis points sequentially to 4.39%.

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Legends League Cricket announces a national campaign with Vande Bharat Express to promote sports in India

Chennai, Nov 07 2023: Legends League Cricket along with Indian Railways has announced a national campaign as the coveted trophy of the league will travel from the 8th of November 2023 on the Vande Bharat Express. The trophy will travel across 17 different states and UT's all over the country. This unique first of its kind experience is a 15-day extravaganza to capture the imagination of cricket lovers from every part of the country. Cricket lovers along with the legends of the sport will be a part of the Legends League Cricket via the nation's fastest train network – the Vande Bharat Express. Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw, Minister of Railways stated, "We welcome Legends League Cricket and the legendary players on the Vande Bharat and look forward to this incredible journey across the nation." Ravi Shastri, Commissioner, Legends League Cricket said, "We are proud to partner with Indian Railways and contribute in promoting sports. The game is getting bigger each day at Legends League Cricket. With more and more players joining, we must keep the fire burning and give fans the chance to witness the best competitive cricket along with the LLC



would say that Legends are going to rock this season." The campaign commencing on the 8th of November from New Delhi and will be the first of this 16-route journey. Indian Railways is always promoting sports and has assured LLC to assist in promoting this journey. Many union ministers and Indian Railways team will be a part of this journey. Marquee sports personalities from across the nation will also be joining them on this coveted event making this journey larger than life. "As we flag off this unique collaboration with the Indian Railways, Legends League Cricket is committed to give the fans the best experience possible. This is a one of its kind of initiative to promote the culture of sports to every corner of the country. Top Legends like Gayle, Sreesanth and Watson along with the LLC

trophy will embark on a nationwide tour in the Vande Bharat Express." said, Mr. Raman Raheja, CEO, Legends League Cricket. The greatest addition to this unique campaign is the inclusion of cricketing legends like Gautam Gambhir, Suresh Raina, Irfan Pathan, Chris Gayle, Kevin Pietersen, S. Sreesanth, Parthiv Patel, Shane Watson, Praveen Kumar, Jhulan Goswami to name just a few. These national and international stars who continue to be an inspiration to more than one generation will be onboard the Vande Bharat Express spanning across the 5 railways zones namely North, South, Central, East, and West. Speaking about this journey, Shane Watson commented, "The idea of promoting the spirit of sports in such a special way is amazing. I am very excited to be a part of such an initiative and

can't wait to share my stories with my fans." "Being a part of the Legends League Cricket, it is exciting for me to witness incredible collaboration of the league with the Vande Bharat. Looking forward to this journey that will build the excitement for the upcoming season." commented Chris Gayle "The collaboration of LLC with the Vande Bharat Express is truly remarkable, and happy to be a part of such initiatives that promotes sports in our nation. I am amazed with the ideas that make the league better each season." Said Sreesanth expressing his delight. The second edition of Legends League Cricket begins from the 18th of November to the 9th of December and will be held in five cities: Ranchi, Dehradun, Jammu, Vizag and Surat. The first match will be played between Bhilwara Kings led by Irfan Pathan, and the defending champions, Gautam Gambhir led India Capitals. Six teams; India Capitals, Manipal Tigers, Gujarat Giants, Urbanisers Hyderabad, Southern Super Stars, Bhilwara Kings will be fighting their way to the coveted trophy that will be unveiled via this tour. Legends League Cricket will be broadcasted on the Star Sports Network and FanCode.

CNG cars poised to capture 25% of Indian automobile market by 2030: Tata Motors' strategic move in the midst of EV revolution

Chennai, Nov 07 2023: Tata Motors, India's leading automobile manufacturer, has made a bold move by making CNG vehicles more desirable and practical. With its twin-cylinder technology, Tata Motors has ensured that CNG-powered vehicles are no longer a compromise. This strategic decision reflects Tata Motors' commitment to sustainability and its recognition of the burgeoning popularity of CNG vehicles in the country.

Over the last three to four years, CNG cars have gained significant traction, especially in the personal vehicle segment. Two key factors have driven this remarkable surge are diverse model offerings and expanding infrastructure. The Indian market now boasts a diverse range of CNG models, with approximately 17-18 variants available across different body

types and price points, offered by various original equipment manufacturers (OEMs). There is also a notable price difference when compared to petrol prices offering a sustained lower operating cost for CNG vehicle owners. The proliferation of CNG refueling stations across the nation has been a game-changer. Three years ago, there were around 1,500 stations; today, that number has surged to approximately 5,500. Notably, states such as Haryana, Delhi, Gujarat, and Maharashtra have embraced CNG vehicles, leading to deep market penetration in these regions.

These two factors have contributed to the impressive growth of the CNG segment, boasting a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 35% over three years and a YoY growth rate of 52%. In the previous year alone,

the market witnessed the sale of 4 lakh CNG cars, with Tata Motors contributing approximately 50,000 units.

Tata Motors has adopted a multi-powertrain strategy, addressing stringent emission requirements and CAF norms. The company has already introduced CNG options for its Tigor and Tiago models, which collectively constitute nearly 40% of sales in their respective families. The introduction of the Altroz iCNG fills a void in the premium hatchback segment. This offering stands as a testament to Tata Motors' commitment to uncompromised quality, featuring twin-cylinder technology for enhanced boot space and aspirational features like a sunroof and wireless charger.

While CNG penetration currently stands at 15% in the

Indian automotive industry, industry experts anticipate a shift towards 20-25% by the end of the decade, driven by its eco-friendly nature. All OEMs are under pressure to meet CAF norms, further bolstering the adoption of CNG.

Tata Motors' multi-powertrain strategy, the availability of diverse CNG models, and the expanding network of CNG filling stations have all contributed to the surge in the CNG segment. Presently, approximately 52,000 CNG vehicles are sold monthly, with private car buyers constituting a significant portion of these sales.

Tata Motors remains steadfast in its commitment to providing innovative, eco-friendly, and aspirational vehicles to cater to the evolving needs of Indian consumers.

Lilting flute recital by Sukrithi Vijay



Chennai, Nov 07 2023: This month's Sunday Kutcheri organized by Sundaram Finance saw a lilting flute recital by 11 year old Sukrithi Vijay. A good crowd sat enthralled as Sukrithi Vijay displayed good technique and flair as she performed 10 songs without a break.

She received an enthusiastic round of applause at the end of the show. Sukrithi Vijay along with the accompanists were felicitated with a memento by Sundaram Finance at the end of the performance.

Manipal Academy of Higher Education Is Hosting an International Conference in Association with Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) on Indo-Pacific; Garner Views of Experts on Regional Cooperation

Chennai, Nov 07 2023: Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), in association with Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS), is hosting an international conference on India and EU in the Indo-Pacific: Strategies, Opportunities, and Challenges on 3rd and 4th November in Manipal, Udupi. The conference, organized by Manipal Centre for European Studies (MCES) and Department of Geopolitics and International Relations (DGIR), brings together academicians, diplomats, policy makers and researchers from India and Europe to deliberate on the role of India and the European Union (EU) in the changing geopolitical dynamics in the Indo-Pacific region.

"The expansion of economic and technological cooperation between the EU and India is mutually beneficial. However, Europe needs to explain its ambivalence in its policy towards China", said Ambassador Rajiv Bhatia. Delivering the keynote address after inaugurating an International Conference on India and EU in the Indo-



Pacific in Manipal, he added, EU's inclination to prioritize trade over security and strategy could pose difficulties in the future. He advocated the need for sustained deliberations on rules-based international order, maritime security, and the potentials of sustainable development for mutually beneficial and deeper cooperation between EU and India.

Prof MD Nalapat in his inaugural address echoed the thought: "In a way that benefits all our people, India and EU need to figure out a framework that creates successful collaborative networks." He invoked the democratic ideals of Konrad Adenauer, the first Chancellor of West Germany after the second World War, and stressed how such ideals are important in quelling predatory powers in this region.

As a region that accounts for sixty percent of the GDP of

the world, the Indo-Pacific has emerged as a site of contestation and has drawn the attention of the global community to reflect on the possibilities of multilateral initiatives, security arrangements, and strategic partnerships. The inaugural session set the stage for the two-day event for discussions on the possibilities of cooperation between India and EU in the Indo-Pacific region to balance trade-dominated relations with geoeconomic and strategic interests along with addressing issues of climate change, biodiversity conservation, and quality healthcare.

The session was presided over by Vice Chancellor, MAHE, Lt Gen (Dr) M D Venkatesh, who observed the key role of universities to nurture and engage young minds to develop international relations and strategies. Fellow panellist, Ms Simran

Dhingra, Head of International Cooperation at KAS, underscored the imperative to bolster India-EU ties on issues of maritime security, defence partnerships and counter-terrorism, especially since India is being increasingly perceived as a key actor in the Indian Ocean. Prof Neeta Inamdar, Head of Manipal Center for European Studies (MCES), welcomed the gathering and further remarked, "I hope cooperation becomes the intent of this conference, and we can all look forward to what we can change to make the world a better place". Prof K P Vijayalakshmi, Head of DGIR, concluded the event with a vote of thanks.

The conference hosts close to thirty delegates from across India and Europe. The sessions over the two days will deliberate on the strategic opportunities and challenges for improving regional cooperation in the Indo-Pacific focusing on issues such as trade and connectivity, climate change, healthcare infrastructure, technological innovation and growth, maritime security, and educational and cultural cooperation.