

“Power is gained by sharing knowledge and not hoarding it”



EMERGING THOUGHTS

May 11, 2022

VOLUME 5 | ISSUE 01

**SURESH & CO.**

---

Chartered Accountants

## Contents

Foreword .....	3
Update for the day #1261   Gig Economy – Shaping the Future of Work .....	4
Update for the day #1262   Bizarre things in North Korea that'll make you thank your stars you weren't born there .....	7
Update for the day #1263   Saint Nicholas Day .....	10
Update for the day #1264   Why PepsiCo India lost Lay's variety potato rights .....	11
Update for the day #1265   The Book of Secrets .....	14
Update for the day #1266   How to finance a film in the crypto era? .....	17
Update for the day #1267   The day Amazon's robots didn't wake up.....	19
Update for the day #1268   Tata, Hakuna Matata and Shitcoins .....	21
Update for the day #1269   How Lay's lost its potatoes? .....	24
Update for the day #1270   How Domino's Lost Its Mascot (Noid)? .....	26
Update for the day #1271   Miss Universe 2021- Harnaaz Kaur Sandhu .....	28
Update for the day #1272   Bipin Rawat The First CDS of India.....	30
Update for the day #1273   Cuba-Cuba.....	32
Update for the day #1274   World's top 10 best places to celebrate Christmas .....	35
Update for the day #1275   Over 1k women clear their first NDA Exam .....	38
Update for the day #1276   What if you can save someone's life with your spit.....	39
Update for the day #1277   Conversation with Falguni Nayar .....	41
Update for the day #1278   Unlimited Vacation Policy – Netflix .....	43
Update for the day #1279   First centurions in International Cricket.....	47
Update for the day #1280   The Ashes .....	48
Update for the day #1281   Christmas .....	50
Update for the day #1282   Pro Kabaddi League .....	51
Update for the day #1283   Booster Doses .....	54
Update for the day #1284   Understanding Live Commerce.....	56
Update for the day #1285   Amar Chitra Katha .....	57
Update for the day #1286   Eminent Personalities born on 29th December.....	60
Update for the day #1287   A reflect on 2021 .....	62
Update for the day #1288   Why New Year Resolutions Fail .....	64
Update for the day #1289   Rewind 2021- Milestone achievements of India in 2021.....	66
Update for the day #1290   Public Provident Fund .....	69

## Foreword

We, at SURESH & CO. are indeed ecstatic to release the series “EMERGING THOUGHTS”. This publication is a consolidated treasury of constructive thoughts and amusing updates of articulated assistants (Interns undergoing Chartered Accountancy course) who will be emerging as Chartered Accountants in the near future and employees.

Man is a social animal. In order to live peacefully & comfortably in society, he needs to remain updated about what is going on across the globe. This concept of daily updates which is sent to the whole organization every morning, inculcates knowledge, confidence about various subjects and invokes one’s interest deeper into the topics by giving them an insight into the happenings in this ever-changing world.

The response we receive from the readers are always overwhelming and this eternal ritual has been an amazing journey reaching milestones as the learning opportunities have always illuminated our path with the essence of knowledge.

At SURESH & CO., every individual is empowered to be bold in the name of innovation and wisdom and is encouraged to think beyond their capabilities. This not only helps them to purify their thoughts, enriches their vision but also gives them an opportunity to reconnoissance various things that are beyond their study domain.

We at SURESH & CO. wanted to share these gems of infant thoughts as conceived by these young minds. It is to be noted that these updates may or may not have been reviewed by any senior or a technical expert and thus these should be used only to kindle thoughts in certain positive directions. Readers are advised to do further research and analysis on the topics which they find interesting.

**“An investment in knowledge pays the best interest.”**

**“The only person who is educated is the one who has learned how to learn and change.”**

# Update for the day #1261 | Gig Economy – Shaping the Future of Work

## What is Gig Economy?

Gig economy can be defined as a work engagement where on one side, there is a service seeker i.e., a consumer with a demand for a specific task, and on the other side, there is a service provider i.e., a gig worker who can perform that specific task. In this economy, tech-enabled platforms connect the consumer to the gig worker to hire services on a short-term basis. Gig workers include self-employed, freelancers, independent contributors, and part-time workers. This project-based gig economy allows the service adopter to cut overhead costs, and the gig worker to get paid for a specific task performed instead of receiving a fixed salary. Thus, a shift from a full-time 9-to-5 job to an on-demand, freelance and task-based economy can be termed as gig economy.

## Trends in Gig Economy

The digital gig economy generated a gross volume of approximately \$204 bn from worldwide customers in 2018. Transportation-based services contributed to over 50% of this value. The size of the gig economy is projected to grow by a 17% CAGR and generate a gross volume of ~\$455 bn by 2023. India has emerged as the 5th largest country for Flexi-staffing after the US, China, Brazil, and Japan. Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Telangana they have most opportunities in terms of growth for the Flexi-workers. Digital platforms have emerged as enablers for employment creation with the power to easily discover job seekers and job providers in the absence of middlemen.

Thus, firms are shrinking in size and we are witnessing a rise in start-ups that are outsourcing many activities to expert service providers on a contractual basis. While the gig economy is popular amongst the blue-collar workers in India – Uber/Ola drivers, there is now huge potential for the white-collar workers as well, due to increasing demand in industries – project-specific consultants, logo/content design, web design etc. (For example– Tapchief in India). The gig economy is expanding from less-skilled services (For example– domestic chores at BookMyChotu in India, TaskRabbit in US) to more skilled jobs (For example– Guru in India, Upwork in US).

## Evolving Workforce Culture

An inclination towards flexible work is being driven by factors such as freedom, technology up-gradation, skill focus, additional income and human capital. Gig economy allows task ownership, convenience and flexibility. Based on tastes and preferences, you can determine the number and

type of projects you work on, the quantum of your earnings, and thus, the work-life balance. For example– you may want to take up five projects in one month to maximize earnings but only three in another month. Similarly, you have the freedom to not offer your services for a task if you don't believe in the underlying cause of the task– a flexibility you don't have in a traditional job. An increase in the adoption of smartphones and the rate of digitization is enabling gig freelancers to offer various professional services through tech-based platforms.

Gig workers can sign up for tasks in which they are more skilled. For example– performing interior decoration on a freelance basis for multiple consumers instead of undertaking a full-time interior designing job at a corporate. With the rising costs and large masses seeking employment, a gig economy opens doors to earning additional income through gig work. A rise in the education level and tech-literacy level is further empowering this economy of the future.

### **Consumers for On-Demand Services:**

Service seekers are moving towards a gig economy for reasons such as cost-cutting and skilled workforce. Corporates find it cheaper to employ freelancers to perform specific tasks by avoiding the traditional administrative and compliance costs associated with regular employees. With an increase in the on-demand services for specific tasks as per business needs, it is now flexible and affordable to hire people skilled in such services. For example– a company can hire a freelance branding consultant to rebrand the company as a one-time activity instead of having a permanent PR team.

Thus, a gig economy offers a symbiotic relationship where both the service seeker and the service provider have equal freedom to look for options that cater to their specific needs.

### **Emerging Business Models**

The gig economy can be divided into different segments/ models, as follows–

Digital Marketplaces sign up demand-driven service providers skilled in niche areas such as beauty, fitness, plumbing, electrical repairs, etc. and offers these services to consumers on a contractual basis as per requirements. This business model allows for the service providers to communicate with the end users directly through the app according to their terms and conditions.

The consumer can simply use a tech-based platform (app). With the platform as an intermediary between the two parties, there is an assurance of receiving the service based on the specifications provided. The platform also offers other value-added services such as customer care, after sale services and service guarantee. However, there is a risk of retention of the service providers and quality assurance. For example– UrbanClap, Care.com, HouseJoy, Helpr.

Service Listing Platform offers a platform to list the demand for various professional services which can then be matched with the services being offered. Essentially, it is a platform convening the demand and supply of services in a gig economy. There are developed terms and conditions

to enable fair use of the platform, but no additional support services are provided by the platform (such as— service guarantee, after sales services etc). There is a risk of low-quality assurance due to lesser service obligations and less stringent verification standards. For instance— Guru, Truelancer, Elance, Awign and 99 designs.

Asset/ Service Sharing is an asset sharing business model that engages gig workers to offer specific services such as transportation, accommodation and delivery. It builds a shared economy for assets and services. It allows for low-cost asset sharing instead of asset ownership. This improves the standard of living considering the affordability quotient.

However, there is a risk of disloyalty among users and gig workers. For example— an Uber driver will feel dissatisfied if he/she is not getting enough rides or rewards to obtain a reasonable income and may switch to Ola in the hope of better services. Other risks include quality assurance due to masses.

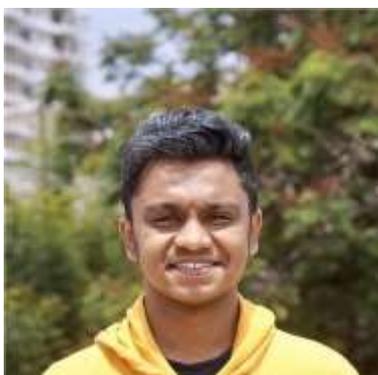
### **Potential Risks**

While the gig economy offers flexibility and control over one's work schedules, clients and projects, it has certain risks and uncertainties associated with it. There is an uncertainty about job security. In the short run, the income earned by the gig workers is unpredictable since the focus is on on-demand projects. In the long run, in traditional jobs, the employers contribute towards employee benefits such as EPF, health insurance, medical insurance, pension and paid leaves, which secure employees from contingent situations such as retirement, disability, illness, old age etc.

Thus, there is a need to strike a balance between flexibility and security. One solution could be a push from the government to offer certain employee rights to the gig workers which secures them about their future. Another could be to promote platforms which are in the business of offering such benefits to gig/ contingent workers.

For example— MBO Partners in Silicon Valley.

By **Anarghya Suvin**



# Update for the day #1262 | Bizarre things in North Korea that'll make you thank your stars you weren't born there

North Korea is a bizarre country to say the least.

There are weird rules and systems in the country which believes the deceased founder Kim Il-sung still rules the regime in spirit form. Here are 20 of them.

## 1. The North Korean calendar is based on its founder's date of birth

It may be the 21st century for the rest of the world but for people in North Korea, it's still the 106th Juche year. The North Korean Juche calendar begins from April 15, 1912, the date of birth of its founder Kim Il-Sung.

## 2. It has only 3 TV channels

With everything under scrutiny, it's quite obvious that the North Korean regime keeps its media on a tight leash. There are only 3 television channels to choose from, with all programs controlled by the government.

## 3. Power cut every night

You know how occasional power cuts are so annoying. Now imagine the state of North Koreans whose entire country goes dark at night. It's apparently due to the energy crisis in the state that it can't supply sufficient electricity to homes. This was revealed after a photo of North Korea taken from space went viral.

## 4. Elections with only one candidate to choose from

With the country's totalitarian regime and the same family ruling since 1948, it's rather funny that the elections are held every year. The voters have only one option to choose from. Whether it's the election for a mayor, provincial governors, or local assemblies, there is only one candidate on the ballot in each district.

What a farce!

## 5. Parents have to provide desks & chairs for their kids

Parents who send their kids to school are required to provide their own desks and chairs. Some students are also forced to do laborious tasks for the government, such as collecting discarded material.

## 6. The 3-generation punishment rule

The three-generation punishment rule is a horrifying reality of the country which can't stand any criticism from its citizens. If one person commits a crime, his entire bloodline, including the

grandparents, parents and children, are sent to prison.

#### **7. You might be held captive for being creative**

It's one of the popular stories that dictator Kim Jong-il kidnapped a film director, Shin Sang-ok and his wife, actor Choi Eun-hee, in 1978 to inject creativity in North Korean films. Later in 1986, after being held against their will for almost a decade, the couple gradually earned the dictator's trust and escaped during a trip to Austria where they were promoting North Korean films.

#### **8. Blue jeans are banned in the country**

North Korea sees blue jeans as a symbol of US imperialism and hence, has banned it in the country.

#### **9. Only 28 hairstyles for men**

Korean men can choose from a list of 28 hairstyles. Any hairdo apart from the government approved hairstyles can lead to an arrest. While unmarried woman must keep their hair short, married women have a lot more options to explore.

#### **10. No religious freedom**

Like restrictions on every other aspect of life, there's no religious freedom in North Korea. The country calls itself an atheist state and persecutes anyone who is seen practising any religion.

#### **11. Human waste as fertilizer**

In 2008, when South Korea stopped sending fertilizers to North Korea, the country faced an acute shortage of fertilizers. So, like everything else, a new law was made and citizens were asked to collect their poop and hand it over to the authorities to help the country's agriculture.

#### **12. No ban on pot**

It is ironic that the country which ignores basic rights of its citizens has freely available weed or cannabis which can be bought from the roadside.

#### **13. Public execution and human rights violation**

Among so many human rights violations and brutalities, North Korea also commits the crime of publicly executing its citizens. Who doesn't remember the 2015 case when the defence chief Hyon Yong-chol was killed in front of hundreds of people with an anti-aircraft gun?

#### **14. Ban on music**

Kim Jong Un's regime is always on a lookout for anything that may threaten his position. In 2015, Kim-Jong-un issued a decree to scrap all cassette tapes and CDs which had state-banned songs, because lyrics could propel dissent among citizens.

**15. The head of the country is dead**

No we are not talking about Kim Jong Un's death rumours. North Korea is a necrocracy, which means the country is ruled by a dead leader, Kim Il-sung. He was posthumously declared as the 'Eternal Leader' of North Korea. King Jong-un is the Supreme Leader without any presidential status.

**16. It is illegal to have hot water bath at home**

For some reasons better known to them, North Korea doesn't allow its citizens to have hot water bath in their homes. If they need a hot water bath, they have to head to a public bath. Human rights, what are they again?

**17. If there is a fire, people are required to save Kim Jong-un's photos first**

In an event of fire, the citizens are expected to save the photos of their Supreme Leaders, followed by their own life.

**18. One can get executed for sleeping in morning meetings**

It is believed that North Korean defence minister was executed for falling asleep during one of his meetings with Kim Jong-un.

**19. International travel is not allowed in North Korea**

If you were born a North Korean, forget all your international trips. One needs to seek prior permission before taking a foreign trip in North Korea.

**20. Visitors are not allowed to talk to locals**

If you happen to be in the country (we wish you don't), you need a separate permit to talk to the locals.

By **Khushi Jain**



## Update for the day #1263 | Saint Nicholas Day

On December 6th, Saint Nicholas Day recognizes the third-century saint who became an inspiration for the modern-day Santa Claus.

St. Nicholas is known for selling all his possessions and giving his money to the poor. Raised as a devout Christian, St. Nicholas dedicated his whole life to serving the sick and suffering.

Legendary stories about St. Nicholas later become part of the inspiration for the modern-day Santa Claus. For example, during the third century, a daughter's chances of marriage increased when her father offered a large dowry to prospective husbands. One story tells of a poor father with three daughters. He had no dowry to offer.

Traditionally, families left their shoes by the fires at night so that they could dry. On three separate occasions, Ol' St. Nicholas provided a dowry for each girl. Legend says he made gold appear in their shoes, drying by the fire.

While St. Nicholas Day is not to be confused with Christmas, some similarities do exist. Traditions include leaving gifts in shoes (or stockings) or the exchange of small gifts. Another tradition suggests leaving treats for good boys and girls. However, the naughty ones receive a twig or chunk of coal.

Interesting facts associated with St. Nicholas:

He is the patron saint of a great many causes. Some of the causes include sailors, travelers, clergy, school children, and thieves, to name a few.

He was born in the village of Patar, located on the southeastern coast of modern-day Turkey

Buried in a tomb in Myra, water believed to have healing powers formed in his grave. It is called the Manna of Saint Nicholas.

December 6th is also known as The Feast of St. Nicholas, widely celebrated in Europe.

By **Chandrashekar.S**



## Update for the day #1264 | Why PepsiCo India lost Lay's variety potato rights

PepsiCo India has lost the rights to its FC5 potato variety, grown exclusively for its popular Lay's potato chips.

On Friday, Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority (PPVFRA) Chairperson K.V. Prabhu passed an order in New Delhi, revoking a PVP (plant variety protection) certificate granted to PepsiCo (India) Holdings Pvt. Ltd for the FC5 potato. The PPVFRA is set up under the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Act 2001.



The authority noted that the registration for FC5 was granted to PepsiCo India despite the fact that it hadn't submitted several documents at the time of registration. It further pointed out many discrepancies in the process of granting the registration and highlighted the "hardship" this caused to farmers.

The order came on an application filed by Kavitha Kuruganti, convenor of the Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture, to revoke the food giant's registration. Soon after the order was passed, Kuruganti tweeted that this would "prevent any other seed or food company from transgressing legally granted farmers' seed freedoms in India."

"This case is a +ve test case when it comes to operationalisation of progressive provisions in India's unique law," she added.

### **Lower moisture content in potato**

The FC5 variety, registered in the US as FL2027, has 5 per cent lower moisture content than other varieties. With 80 per cent moisture content, as compared to the usual 85 per cent, this variety is considered more suitable for processing and therefore, for making snacks such as potato chips.

The variety was first cultivated by Dr Robert W. Hoopes, who holds the most potato patents and potato variety protections in the whole world. He was hired by the Frito-Lay Company (an American subsidiary of PepsiCo) as a Principle Scientist/Potato Breeder at the Research Center, US in 1987.

He then developed disease resistant potato varieties superior in flavour and colour. Several of his varieties are grown all over the world for PepsiCo's famous potato chips.

FL2027 came to be registered in the US in 2005 and was put to commercial use in India in 2009, according to a Quartz report. PepsiCo had then granted licence to some farmers in Punjab to grow the variety on a buyback system. This arrangement allows the company to buy all the produce from these farmers at pre-decided rates. PepsiCo applied for registration of the potato variety in India in June 2011. It was granted in 2016.

### **The hot potato case**

In April 2019, PepsiCo sued nine Gujarat farmers for cultivating the same potato variety, accusing them of infringing its intellectual property rights (IPR). It sought over Rs 1 crore each from the farmers for alleged patent infringement under the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Act, 2001.

The IPR infringement case triggered a backlash from farmers and political parties alike. However, PepsiCo soon withdrew the suit "after discussions with the government." In a statement, it said that it was "relying on the said discussions to find a long term and an amicable resolution of all issues around seed protection."

Kuruganti then filed the application for revocation of the certification in June 2019, concerned about the impact of the registered variety on the livelihood of the farmers. She had sought revocation on several grounds, including incorrect information provided by PepsiCo, and alleging that the grant of protection was not in public interest.

### **'Hardships to the farmers'**

In its order, the authority also noted discrepancies in the date of first sale of the variety, as disclosed by PepsiCo.

"No doubts remain in the claim of Revocation Applicant (Kuruganti) that several farmers have been put to hardship including the looming possibility of having to pay huge penalty on the purported infringement they were supposed to have been committing which did not eventually happen as on date, simply because without being the legitimate breeder or his successor and also not being the assignee of the breeder of the potato variety FL 2027, the Registered Breeder (PepsiCo) exercised his Plant Breeder's right to file a suit for infringement against farmers (though it was subsequently withdrawn) the fact is that they have been put to hardship. This violates public

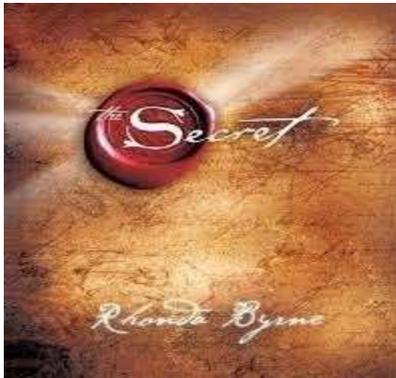
interest,” asserted the order.

The authority also opined that the Registrar in this case had been “superficial by only cursorily glancing through information documentation provided in reply to his own query to the Applicant (PepsiCo) while accepting incomplete or obviously incorrect documents”.

By **Harshith Mehta**



## Update for the day #1265 | The Book of Secrets



Sentence-Summary: The Secret is a self-help book by Rhonda Byrne that explains how the law of attraction, which states that positive energy attracts positive things into your life, governs your thinking and actions, and how you can use the power of positive thinking to achieve anything you can imagine.

You know how you sometimes get really excited about something, it hijacks all your thinking for a couple of days, and then a few months later, after you've long forgotten it again, it randomly pops back into your life? Or have you ever set an outrageous goal, never looked at it again, and later realized you've already accomplished it?

This once happened to famous talk show host Oprah Winfrey. She read a book called The Color Purple, and immediately recognized herself as destined to portray one of its characters in a big Hollywood movie. This manifested even more when she got a random call to audition for a secret movie, which turned out to be The Color Purple. However, as she didn't hear back for months, she was eventually ready to let go of the idea. Right then, she received the call from Steven Spielberg.

That was in 1984. For the next 20 years, Oprah couldn't quite explain how she'd managed to turn this fantasy into reality. Until author Rhonda Byrne told her about The Secret. This 2006 movie and global bestseller that's sold almost 30 million copies what millions of people consider the perfect blueprint for achieving your goals. Today, we'll analyze it.

Here's the essence of The Secret book in 3 lessons:

1. The law of attraction is one of the most prevalent principles in the world.
2. To use the law of attraction, you must think about what you want, not what you want to avoid.
3. The three steps of the law of attraction are asking, believing, and receiving.

Do you have a big, crazy vision? Here's how to prime yourself for achieving it.

**Lesson 1: One of the strongest rules in life is the law of attraction.**

While Byrne packaged the idea in a new way, which appealed to the masses, the law of attraction itself is as old as we are: like attracts like. In German we have a saying: “As you shout into the woods, so they echo back.” In essence, the law of attraction states that what you think and feel determines what you’ll attract into your life.

The concept has been written about as long as self-help books are a thing. The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho, The Master Key System by Charles Haneel, and even the book Rhonda herself found it in, The Science of Getting Rich by Wallace Wattles, all describe it in different forms. For example, if you focus on all the negative feedback you get as an artist, you’ll likely encourage more criticism. Similarly, it’s hard to imagine a person who hates money to become wealthy, and so on. What the book is often criticized for is its overemphasis on the power of the law. While there is a concept in psychology called priming, that shows we intuitively act based on influences, you can’t live your entire life this way. So yes, it’s important to put yourself in the right state of mind to achieve your goals, but that alone won’t cut it.

**Lesson 2: The law of attraction only works when you think in positives, not negatives.**

Another case study of the law of attraction is Jim Carrey, who, funnily enough, discussed his experience with Oprah in 1997, also before she knew about The Secret. As an aspiring actor, Carrey would stop on his drive home every night, think about his future accomplishments and visualize them. He took comfort in the fact that he “[did] have these things, I just don’t have a hold of them yet, but they’re out there.”

He even wrote himself a check for ten million dollars and post-dated it 5 years. Lo and behold, he did end up making the sum from Dumb and Dumber, just around the deadline. What’s remarkable about the way Carrey did it, and Rhonda says this is a prerequisite for the law of attraction to work, is that he always envisioned the positives that would come into his life, rather than the negatives he was trying to avoid.

When it comes to our internal monologue, loss aversion is a powerful driving force. We’re a lot more worried about losing what we have, rather than getting what we want. That’s why most of us subconsciously play not to lose, instead of playing to win. In part, this is why people who take more risks have less competition. Fewer people shoot for great than for average.

Plus, if you’re trying to convince yourself, framing something as a win sounds more convincing than fear mongering. That’s why at Better Humans, we always frame headlines in terms of positive transformation, not negative consequences from inaction.

**Lesson 3: To manifest your dreams, you must ask, believe, and then receive.**

Besides regularly thinking about your goals, visualizing them, and framing them positively, Rhonda suggests an actual, three-step process you can use to make the law of attraction work for you:

1. **Ask.** This is about being specific in what you want out of life. Vague questions get vague answers. Use a present tense structure and write down what you want from a perspective of gratitude: “I’m grateful to have [INSERT DESIRE].”
2. **Believe.** If you don’t have unwavering faith in your goal, why should others? This is about radiating confidence, so that the people you meet along the way will support you. Don’t be blindly optimistic, but in a go-getter spirit.
3. **Receive.** Imagine how you’ll feel once you accomplish your goal. What would life be like? Visualize. This’ll prime your actions in the right direction.

Again, I’m all for planning, being motivated, and believing in yourself. However, the one big caveat to all this is that your actions have to back up your state of mind. As Gary Vee says “the law of attraction only works if you do.” So think positive thoughts, prep for success, pay attention, and then work like a madman to get what you want.

**The Secret Review**

They say the best books split the audience and this one definitely does. Some people swear on it like gospel, others dismiss it as feel-good mumbo jumbo. I think the truth is, as so often, somewhere in the middle. Yes, this power of positive thinking idea works, but only to an extent, and they’re not the be-all, end-all. Take them with a grain of salt, reflect, read *The Secret*, and then come to your own conclusions about it.

By **Rithik Jain**



## Update for the day #1266 | How to finance a film in the crypto era?

Needless to say, movie financing is a perilous endeavor. But now, one movie producer wants to make the whole thing more exciting by crowdsourcing the financing aspect. And he intends to do it using NFTs or Non-Fungible Tokens.

First, let's break this up. What does a non-fungible token actually mean? Especially that word in the middle—Fungible.

Well, think of it this way. If you have a Rs 10 note right now, you could exchange it with another Rs. 10 note and it would be indistinguishable. They are interchangeable and they hold equal value. It's what economists call a fungible token. However non-fungible tokens can't be substituted this way. They'll always be unique and if they are represented on an immutable ledger—the blockchain, it becomes a non-fungible token (NFT). Meaning, a token assigned to you on an internet ledger (blockchain) maintained by a host of connected computers, will always belong to you unless you choose to dispense it elsewhere. The records can't be altered and your ownership of the token is incontestable—at least in theory.

And while NFTs can be used to mark ownership of any asset of your liking, typically they're used to represent ownership of digital assets like art, music or memes. The only problem however is that owning an NFT doesn't automatically guarantee "complete" ownership. For instance, imagine somebody creating an NFT associated with a popular music video. You could buy that NFT and brag about it to your friends. However, you may not be entitled to any royalty fee the music may come to generate. That money will still go to the composer. And while artists can sometimes throw in this extra privilege if they so desire, it's not something that happens all the time.

So there are also those who see NFTs as nothing more than glorified trading cards. It's fun when you're discussing it within the ecosystem, but outside of it, NFTs may not mean much. The flip side however is that some NFTs have been selling for a lot of money. And by a lot, we really mean a lot. Consider, for instance, this cat meme.

The original digital rendition sold for \$590,000 in an online auction. And some NFTs have even sold for millions

Clearly, there's some potential here. But that aside let's get back to the main story shall we?

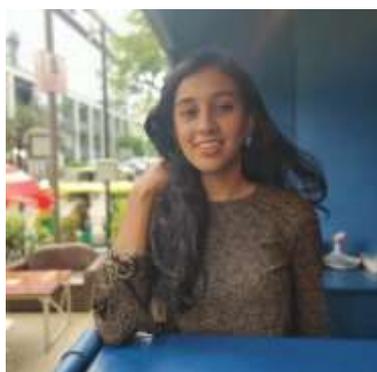
So recently, a long time Hollywood producer Niels Juul —best known for producing the mob drama "Irishman" decided to take the plunge and finance his movie using NFTs. Juul intends to

solicit funds and produce a series of full-length feature films entirely through NFTs. The plan is to raise around \$8 to \$10 million by selling close to 10,000 NFTs to a mix of public and traditional industry investors. And he hopes to do it soon.

For people that buy the NFT—Well, they get to own the digital token representing some degree of ownership. But more importantly, Juul has also promised to share a slice of the profits these movies might make along the way. So on this occasion, it won't just be about bragging rights. Instead, the NFTs could actually be a way to make big money.

Now nobody knows for sure if Juul will succeed in this endeavour. But if he does, this could open up a whole new avenue for producers to access capital. It could make crowdfunding easier and more importantly, popular. Perhaps this could change the face of movie financing altogether.

By **Sanmanti S**



## Update for the day #1267 | The day Amazon's robots didn't wake up



Imagine this—You wake up every morning and soon enough a digital butler attends to you. You want the house vacuumed? Just say the word and it'll be done. You want to preheat the oven? Don't worry, the smart oven already knows your preference and it's chugging along as we speak. The refrigerator meanwhile knows you're running low on milk and it's already ordering an extra carton so you can stock up for tomorrow. It's like you're living in the future.

However, the reality is that some of us are actually living in this fantasy world right now. Smart ovens, sophisticated refrigerators, automated vacuum cleaners and personal digital assistants are making life easier and it's not too farfetched to think that we are already dependent on a whole host of smart devices to help us get on with our lives.

Don't believe us?

Here's another thought experiment—Imagine these smart devices decide to take a break. Imagine you go—“Hey Alexa”, and you receive no reply.

Well, that reality did manifest quite recently and there was chaos all around. On 7th December, Amazon Web Services (AWS) suffered an outage across many parts of the world and all those smart devices powered by AWS went quiet alongside it. Truth be told, it wasn't just a smart device problem. Many businesses suffered in tandem. These companies use Amazon cloud solutions to store data, run their applications and do all sorts of other things and all of them had to bide their time until somebody could figure out what was happening. Thankfully Amazon did fix the issue soon enough, but not before it became apparent to everyone how dependent we are on the internet giant.

In one egregious case, the smart doorbell service Ring stopped working altogether. Users began seeing issues with their home monitoring service as they couldn't disable alarms, monitor children

or watch out for intruders during this time. Elsewhere, the investing platform Public also went down as AWS began to sputter. People couldn't transact on the platform and it could have actually eroded a lot of investor wealth in the process. But wait, we are just getting started.

Media houses like the Washington Post couldn't publish their stories on time. Netflix's streaming services wouldn't open in some regions. Visitors couldn't enter Disney theme parks. And Tinder stopped working for a while. Imagine that? Tinder!!!

And it's becoming all the more obvious that this dependence has only increased since the pandemic. Companies are spending billions to boost their digital presence and AWS is their first choice. In fact, the company now controls over 40% of the \$64 billion industry tending to cloud infrastructure services.

Crazy!

You would think that this kind of market dominance has been predicated on a stellar performance. Which it is, to a certain degree. However, these big bang outages are a matter of grave concern. AWS alone suffered major outages in 2011, 2015, 2017, and 2020. In 2017, companies on the US S&P500 Index lost \$150 million due to a 4-hour AWS outage. And the losses are only going to mount from here on in.

So, what can companies do to avoid such an eventuality?

Well, they could invest some more and implement redundancies with other cloud service providers. But since this is an expensive affair, most people simply let it slide unless it's mission-critical. If it's an Amazon product like Ring or Alexa, well then, it's likely that an AWS outage will take down those services no matter what. And for the company, this should be a matter of concern. Right now, as it stands, the company makes around 12% of its revenue from AWS. However, the unit contributes over 50% of its profits. It's a cash cow. So hopefully Amazon will act on this and make sure that a big chunk of the internet doesn't go offline all of a sudden once again.

By **Yashaswini R U**



## Update for the day #1268 | Tata, Hakuna Matata and Shitcoins



Nearly 1725 days ago, at the stroke of midnight, India launched its most ambitious tax reform — the goods and services tax (GST). It was supposed to be a magic pill — a silver bullet for all those pesky tax complications. The Prime Minister even called it the “Good and Simple Tax.”

But last week, we had a stark reminder that even the most well-intentioned schemes can spawn confusion.

So here’s what happened.

Haryana-based Khera Trading Company sells a cheesy pizza topping under the brand name Goodrich. You know what a pizza topping is, right? You take some of this stuff, splash it over your pizza and you’ll have a nice stringy cheesy meal once it’s out of the oven.

Now the Khera Trading Company argues that their preparation ought to be classified as processed cheese. After all, it’s a cheese topping, that looks like cheese, tastes like cheese and even smells like it—for the most part. And if you were to classify it as such, then the product is taxed at 12%.

But a court in Haryana didn’t quite agree with this assessment. Their argument was simple — “The processed cheese, in this case, isn’t processed cheese at all, for processed cheese must be manufactured by combining, mixing, melting and emulsifying, with the aid of heat... one or more varieties of cheese, and one or more of the following: cream or other dairy products, salt, spices, flavouring and water.”

The Goodrich pizza topping however included Water, Mozzarella Cheese, Milk solids, Skimmed milk powder, and... this is the most important bit... Vegetable oil. In fact, here are the proportions—14.5% Mozzarella cheese and 22% Vegetable oil.

Now, you might look at this and go—Why is the company using vegetable oil in what is cheese topping? Well, we can't say for sure, but there could be multiple reasons. Vegetable oil helps with texture. It helps with consistency and is inexpensive. But as we noted earlier, the definition of processed cheese precludes Vegetable oil altogether. So the court believed that the Goodrich preparation fails the key ingredient test. A test that is used to determine what a product truly is.

So if it's not processed cheese? What is it?

The court believes that Goodrich pizza topping is what you would call an edible preparation taxed at 18%.

However, the lawyers for Khera Trading company argued otherwise. Their contention was this—“The Milk solids and the Mozzarella cheese combined account for nearly 30% of the product. Besides, it doesn't matter what the key ingredient is, so long as it passes the common parlance test i.e. how do regular consumers see this product?”

Do they see it as processed cheese? Or do they see it as something else?

In fact, they even quoted a ruling from the US Customs department—a matter related to the classification of Mozzarella Cheese sticks. For the uninitiated, the cheese sticks contain more bread than cheese. In fact, almost twice the amount. However, the product was classified under the header “Cheese and Curd” since the essential character of the product (cheese) was retained even after the addition of bread.

The court didn't buy this argument. They ruled that any product with such high contents of vegetable oil couldn't possibly be treated as processed cheese and as such classified it under the header “Miscellaneous edible preparation” taxing it at 18%. Now, this ruling immediately created a lot of confusion since people automatically believed that all pizza toppings would now court a tax rate of 18%.

However, after reading this story, you probably understand the precarious nature of this ruling. This ruling was limited to Goodrich Pizza Toppings—a product containing high amounts of vegetable oil. If it only contained Mozzarella Cheese, then the court wouldn't have ruled this way.

But that being said, there is a problem here.

Oftentimes, tax rulings such as these can be extremely confusing for industry incumbents. Take for instance court rulings on classifying flavoured lassi and flavoured milk. It seems flavoured lassi continues to be treated just like Lassi (courting no tax at all), but flavoured milk carries a tax rate of 12% unlike regular milk (with no tax).

In other cases, tax authorities extend contradictory rulings in different states. Take the case of auto manufacturers. In one case, the AAR (tax court) in Madhya Pradesh ruled car manufacturers wouldn't be able to claim any tax credit on demo vehicles. However, the AARs in Maharashtra and Kerala didn't agree with this assessment. They argued that companies could claim tax credit on demo cars.

So you see, GST isn't just about setting a tax structure. But it's also about classifying different items. And if there isn't a way to consistently deliver unambiguous rulings, then you'll have entrepreneurs scratching their heads more often than not.

By **Brinda Rameswaran**



## Update for the day #1269 | How Lay's lost its potatoes?

A lot goes into making a bag of Potato chips. Especially the ones that Lay's markets. And despite the copious amounts of air you find in each packet, the humble potato is the star ingredient. But here's the thing — You can't just use any potato to make those delicious chips. You have to use the best variety. And if you're PepsiCo India, marketing a brand as popular as Lay's you have to use the best of the best.

So what does this potato look like?

Well, it has to be dry with very little water content. And it has to bear the onslaught of insects and bacteria. Preferably something that's easy to process and one that tastes good. Now, of course, this kind of potato doesn't grow in the wild. You'll have to cultivate it in a lab. And a certain Dr Robert Hoopes, working at the Frito-Lay research facility perfected the breed. He created a potato variety so good that it's still used in many parts of the world, decades after it was originally cultivated. Needless to say, PepsiCo had a star in its hands. They called it FL2027 and it was officially registered in India under the trademark — FC5.

Everything was swell.

But perfecting a potato variety is one thing and growing it at scale is a whole different ballgame. They simply couldn't risk supply disruptions. So in a bid to alleviate some of these risks, they decided to work with farmers across India. They'd give them planting material, financial assistance, insurance protection and above all else, they supplied those lab brewed proprietary seeds and extended the license to grow FL2027 on a contractual basis. The farmers in turn were expected to only sell the potatoes to PepsiCo and once again, it seemed like everything was going well.

Until one day, they decided to rock the boat.

After finding out that some farmers were illegally growing this protected variety without explicit permission, PepsiCo decided to sue them for crores of rupees. The farmers meanwhile simply claimed they had bought the potato seeds in local markets. And since they are accorded overarching rights on what they can grow and sell, you could see why they felt they weren't in the wrong at all.

Having said that, multinational corporations are also accorded protection under certain provisions of the law and it seemed like the battle would reach a climax inside a courtroom. However, soon enough, political leaders got involved and once that happened, everybody knew how this was going to end. A big foreign company bullying Indian farmers? PepsiCo was not going to win this. And after some deliberation, they decided to withdraw the suit altogether.

You would think the story would end here. However, after tasting victory, the farmer group seems to have gone for the jugular. Kavitha Kuruganti, convenor of the Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture, decided to file a plea asking the government to revoke the registration of FL2027 altogether. She contended that PepsiCo should not be accorded the exclusive right to grow this potato variety and guess what? She won!

But how does anyone manage to win such a case against a multinational giant like PepsiCo India?

Well, procedural lapses, documentation errors and a lot of grit and determination. For instance, there is no doubt that Dr Robert W Hoopes was the original breeder of FL2027. However, to be recognized as a registered breeder in India, he had to assign the rights to the US company, who in turn had to assign it to PepsiCo India. However this wasn't done right. In one instance they drafted the assignment deed on an unstamped paper.

As the order states —

The assignment deed dated September 2003 filed... cannot be taken on record as it is unstamped. Under Section 35 of the Indian Stamp Act 1899, an unstamped document could not be relied on for the purpose of evidence of registration.

In another case, they did something called an oral assignment. There weren't even any documents to prove that the rights had in fact been assigned to the registered breeder in India. And the order states rather unequivocally that such things cannot be recognised.

So after consideration of the facts at hand and perusing other matters of importance, the chairperson at the "Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority" of India decided to revoke the registration of FL2027 altogether. Meaning, PepsiCo India no longer has the exclusive rights to breed this unique variety.

By **Vishnu M. S.**



## Update for the day #1270 | How Domino's Lost Its Mascot (Noid)?



### Domino's Mascot- The Noid

In 1986, advertising agency Group 243 was tasked with creating a mascot for Domino's Pizza. Their creation—the Noid—was one of the most inexplicably popular mascots in corporate history. But in a case of branding gone bad, the Noid's rise plummeted when he inspired a real-life crime by a schizophrenic namesake.

Even compared to the worst corporate mascots, the Noid was a unique devil. A gibbering, pot-bellied, buck-toothed pervert squeezed into a skin tight rabbit costume, the Noid was a Hamburglar-like character wholly devoted to delaying pizza deliveries. Only Domino's Pizza, the ad campaign claimed, delivered pizzas that were "Noid-proof." Avoid the Noid by ordering from Domino's and get your pizza in 30 minutes or less.

The Noid was a strange character to capture the cultural zeitgeist, but in the 1980s, he was popular enough to earn not just one, but two separate video games, as well as dominate a line of toys and merchandise. The Noid's bizarre popularity was probably helped by the fact that Domino's Pizza chose Will Vinton Studios—creators of the California Raisins—to bring the Noid to life through Claymation.

What eventually killed off the Noid?

On January 30, 1989, a 22-year-old man named Kenneth Lamar Noid walked into a Domino's Pizza in Atlanta, Georgia, with a .357 magnum revolver and took two employee's hostages. After a five-hour standoff during which Noid demanded \$100,000 in ransom money, the employees in question escaped. But the damage to the Noid brand was done: not only was the headline too good to ignore ("Domino's Hostages Couldn't Avoid the Noid this Time") but it turned out that Kenneth Lamar Noid actually believed he was the Noid—or, at least, the Noid's original inspiration.

A paranoid schizophrenic, Noid believed that Domino's Pizza founder Tom Monaghan had created the "Avoid the Noid" campaign specifically to persecute him. Sadly, the incident sounded the death knell for both Noids. Unable to shake his belief that Domino's had created the Noid campaign to ridicule him, Noid spent three months in a mental institution, and eventually committed suicide in 1995. As for the Claymation demon that drove him to his death, save a brief appearance in a Facebook game in 2011 to celebrate his 25th birthday, the Noid hasn't been seen since.

By **Priyanshi Jain**



## Update for the day #1271 | Miss Universe 2021- Harnaaz Kaur Sandhu



### Significance of the Miss Universe

It's about personality, it's about having courage to bring differences in society, and having the courage to represent yourself and know you're strong enough to go with your opinions in front of the whole universe.

According to the official website of Miss Universe Organization, the selection committee of Miss Universe looks for a woman who is "comfortable in her own skin; someone who is authentic, empathetic and determined to make her mark in the world." Miss Universe pageant is a platform where an individual can lend voice to the issues of the downtrodden people, or the various problems that trouble our society. The crown of the Miss Universe enables one to lend voice to the voiceless and help in the eradication of many problems in our society.

Harnaaz Kaur Sandhu (born 3 March 2000) is an Indian model and beauty pageant titleholder who was crowned Miss Universe 2021. Sandhu had been previously crowned Miss Diva Universe 2021, and is the third entrant from India to win Miss Universe. Sandhu was additionally crowned as Femina Miss India Punjab in 2019, and placed as a semifinalist at Femina Miss India 2019.

Sandhu began competing in pageantry as a teenager, winning titles such as Miss Chandigarh 2017 and Miss Max Emerging Star India 2018. At first, Sandhu did not tell her father when she registered for her first pageant, and only informed him of her participation after she won; despite this, he was accepting of her decision to pursue pageantry.

After winning the title of Femina Miss India Punjab 2019, Sandhu competed in Femina Miss

India, where she ultimately placed in the Top 12.

At the end of the event, Sandhu was crowned as the winner by outgoing titleholder Adline Castelino.

As Miss Diva 2021, Sandhu received the right to represent India at Miss Universe 2021. The competition was held on 12 December 2021 in Eilat, Israel. Sandhu advanced from the initial pool of 80 contestants into the top sixteen, later advancing to the top ten, top five, and top three, before being crowned as the winner. Following her win, she became the third Indian woman to be crowned Miss Universe after Lara Dutta in 2000 and Sushmita Sen in 1994.

By **Mithun H S**



## Update for the day #1272 | Bipin Rawat The First CDS of India



India's first Chief of Defence Staff and longest-serving four-star officer General Bipin Rawat, known as the transformer in the Indian military's higher defense organization, passed away after a helicopter carrying him crashed in Tamil Nadu.

The Chief of Defence Staff of the Indian Armed Forces (CDS) is the military head and chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee of the Indian Armed Forces. The Chief of Defence Staff is the senior-most and highest-ranking uniformed officer on active duty in the Indian military and is the principal staff officer and chief military adviser to the Minister of Defence.

The Chief also heads the Department of Military Affairs. The first Chief of Defence Staff was Bipin Rawat who took office on 1 January 2020 and held it until his death in a helicopter crash on 8 December 2021. The CDS is a four-star officer selected from among the serving officers of the Indian Armed Forces.

He has also been part of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force and has commanded a multinational brigade in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The mission was conducted from the operation command of Dimapur-based III Corps under Rawat's supervision.

He was Army chief when India carried out airstrikes targeting a Jaish-e-Mohammad terror training centre in Pakistan's Balakot in February 2019, days after over 40 soldiers were killed in a terror attack in Pulwama in Jammu and Kashmir.

He was Vice Chief of Army Staff when India carried out a surgical strike across the Line of Control in September 2016, in retaliation against a terror strike on an army camp in Uri in which 19 soldiers were killed. He was part of the planning and closely monitored the strike in Delhi.

Three months later, he took over as *Army Chief*.

He had survived a helicopter crash six years ago, in 2015, when he was Lieutenant General. On February 3, 2015, the Cheetah helicopter he was flying in crashed moments after take-off in Nagaland. All onboard suffered minor injuries at the time.

By **Punith B**



## Update for the day #1273 | Cuba-Cuba

The largest island in the Caribbean also known as the “Pearl of the Antilles”. Cuba is a country that’s very much alive with excitement. The country brims with the retelling of its colorful history and museums that showcase how the revolution took place. Everywhere you go, you’ll see footprints of Cuban greats like Castro and Guevara. Cabaret and lively jazz are played right next to each other. Right from its hillside sugar plantations to the historic, baroque Havana with Cadillacs rolling down the street, Cuba bursts with sights, sounds, and smells that are heady, to say the least. Keed reading this article to learn about the top things that Cuba is famous for.

### 1. Cuban Baroque architecture

Cuba, especially the lovely “La Habana Vieja”, is like a little slice of Spain in the Caribbean. The city’s UNESCO World Heritage Historic District is one of the most striking and yet earthy places in the Americas. There are rows and rows of peeling and fading Andalusian-style arcades and baroque townhouses. They hide within their hatches soukous rumba bars and tequila cantinas that you should be visiting at least once. Plus, Havana bursts with a profusion of cobblestoned squares, right from Plaza de la Catedral to the central Plaza de Armas. They all are embellished with neo-classical architectural palaces and stunning historical churches, and more. Finally, don’t miss going to the 18th-century Fortaleza de San Carlos de la Cabaña, a highlight on the Havana coast.

### 2. Rum

Cuba is synonymous with two things, one of which is rum (You’ll know the other soon enough). Havana Club is the commonest rum you’ll find in most bars, but some classic rum-in-the-box is the local flavor you ought to try. Drink rum like a local right out of a juice box-looking package that’s sold at walk-up windows of shops and cafeterias everywhere. if you’re a rum aficionado, the birthplace of Havana Club is the Arechabala Rum Distillery in the city of Cárdenas. On the other hand, Bacardi was born at the Bacardi Factory in Santiago de Cuba.

### 3. Cigars

The other things Cuba is synonymous with and famous for is Cigars! While Cuban cigars are sold for less than USD 1 on the streets of Havana Viejo, the best ones come right off the farms. It isn’t exactly hard to find a cigar farm in Cuba, but its premier tobacco region is Pinar Del Rio, which lies around two hours west of Havana. The oasis is peppered with lots of tobacco farms, but one in particular that stands out is Alejandro Robaina Tobacco Plantation in San Luis.

### 4. Cuban coffee

Did you know that Cuba’s first coffee plantations now have a place on the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites? Today, coffee is a part of the national culture and goes beyond the mere

‘café Cubano’ or the Cuban espresso. Locals receive a monthly ration of coffee and brew it in a stove-top espresso maker. No matter where in the country you are, you’ll always find local coffee shops and the bigger cafeterias selling delicious Cuban coffee. Try Colado, which is a typical Cuban espresso that’s served in larger portions; Café con Leche, which is coffee and hot milk; and Cortadito, which is espresso topped with steamed milk.

## 5. Che Guevara

No conversation about Cuba is complete without talking about the revered revolutionary, Che Guevara. Born Ernesto Guevara de la Serna, he was a Marxist revolutionary, military theorist, diplomat, guerilla leader, and author rolled into one. The guerilla hero famously allied with Fidel Castro to lead the 1959 Cuban Revolution to depose the Batista regime, reshaping Cuba’s future forever. When you’re in Havana, check out Hotel Nacional. During the Cuban missile crisis, it’s said to have been the base of operations for Castro and Che Guevara.

## 6. Cuban music

Music is everywhere in Cuba, and in different forms - think everything from timba, Nueva Trova, and jazz to the world-famous bolero and rumba. It might have its principal roots in West Africa and Spain, but sees influences of diverse genres from all over the world. In fact, it’s widely regarded as one of the richest and most influential regional kinds of music on the planet. So, whether you see a traditional Trova performance or watch salsa live in a happening restaurant in Havana, the rhythm is going to get you.

## 7. The beaches of Havana

The lively old town of Havana Viejo is known for, amongst other things, its stunning beaches. The coastline of the Cuban capital is fringed by pristine, white-sand beaches, palm trees swaying in the breeze, and the crystal-clear turquoise waters of the Caribbean. Begin with the biggest and best of the city’s beaches, Santa María del Mar, which is perfect for a beach party. Escape the crowds and mingle with the locals at the relatively quieter Playa Boca Ciega. Spend an entire day at Playa Guanabo or snorkel at Playa Bacuranao. Finally, don’t miss going to Playa El Salado, which is aptly named “Salty Beach”!

## 8. Classic American cars

How many movies and music videos have we seen of people riding the seaside streets of Havana in a cool, vintage and utterly vibrant classic American car? Why not do that while you’re visiting the country? In fact, these vintage cars and Cuba go absolutely hand-in-hand. Choose a fabulous, multicolored 1950s or 60s convertible and soak up the sights of Cuba while keeping the style quotient high. Plus, you’ll have some memorable, picture-perfect photos of your vacation! Pro tip: Keep the sunscreen, sunglasses, and hat right beside you.

### 9. Havana (from INR 2,351)

When Camilla Cabello sang “Half of my heart is in Havana”, we all felt that. The Cuban capital is like a confusing but gorgeous jigsaw puzzle. The city has an enduring survivalist spirit, with a long history of piracy, mobster rule, colonialism, and what-not. Its art culture is something to behold, as are its colonial thoroughfares peppered with grand, baroque remnants of a storied past. Don’t miss exploring the iconic 1920s landmark, the National Capitol Building, Plaza Vieja, Catedral de San Cristóbal, and the iconic esplanade of Malecon.

### 10. Cuban cuisine

Cuban food has strong roots in the Caribbean, Spanish, African, and even Chinese cuisines! Cubans believe that the right, well-cooked dish can help celebrate the biggest of victories and help uplift the mood even in the worst of situations. Cuban food is mostly centered around meat, and feature some absolute favorites that are now eaten across the world. They include the all-time amazing Cuban sandwich, Arroz Con Polo, Ropa Viejo, Maduros, Bunelous, Yuca, Masitas, Picadillo, and more.

By **Vaibhav Bhansali**



## Update for the day # 1274 | World's top 10 best places to celebrate Christmas

### 1. Bethlehem, West Bank

With today's emphasis on present grabbing and overindulging, it's hard to deny that the real meaning of Christmas often seems forgotten. For a refresher, nothing compares to a pilgrimage to Jesus' birthplace. The energy on Manger Square and in the Old City on Christmas Eve could light a forest of Christmas trees. The place to be as the clock strikes 12 is St Catherine's Church, for the Midnight Mass service.

### 2. Santa Claus Village, Finland

When too much Santa is never enough, rug up and head north to Finland's Arctic Circle. The jolly man in the red suit is this neighbourhood's most famous resident, and round these parts they milk him for all he's worth. Still, the deep wintertime snow and reindeer-dotted forests go a long way toward offsetting the touristy atmosphere, though there's an amusement park called Santa Park not far from the village. You'll need deep pockets, but you'd have to be pretty Grinch-like to leave without a smile.

### 3. New York City, Usa

Surely you know what Christmas in the Big Apple looks like, thanks to countless movies: Christmas lights, cheesy muzak, preferably a light dusting of snow. The world's tallest Christmas tree is lit at the Rockefeller Center in early December. Ice skating below it is a must for wintertime visitors, as is checking out the window displays in New York's largest department stores. Finish with a New York Ballet performance of "The Nutcracker" for a Christmas straight out of central casting

### 4. Bondi Beach, Australia

Hit the beach to talk turkey with fellow travellers. Bondi is the antithesis of northern-hemisphere Christmas cliches: sun, sand and surf replace snow and fairy lights. Come 25 December the beach acts as a magnet for backpackers a long way from home, who celebrate alongside other "Christmas orphans." Bands and DJs rock the Pavilion, everyone checks out everyone else, and a festive atmosphere prevails. Items you may not normally take to Christmas dinner: swimsuit, sunscreen, sunhat.

### **5. Midnight Mass, The Vatican, Italy**

You can rest assured that the spiritual heart of Catholicism knows how to do Christmas. The Eternal City is magical at any time of year, but December has an extra frisson, with roasted chestnuts sold on every corner and the city awash with presepi (nativity scenes) - check them out on St Peter's Square, Piazza Navona, and in the church of Santa Maria in Aracoeli on the Capitoline Hill. It's the Vatican that pulls the most pilgrims. Midnight Mass in St Peter's Basilica on Christmas Eve, or at noon on Christmas Day, is an affair to remember.

### **6. Dublin, Ireland**

With a cracking sense of humor, the staunchly Catholic Irish have a few novel ways to honor Christmas. The most eyebrow-raising is a morning swim on the 25th at the Forty-Foot sea-water pool. In the lead-up to the big day there's life aplenty on Dublin's streets and the craic flows. There's the 12 Days of Christmas Market at the Docklands, cheesy pantos, Christmas lights, ice skating, and markets and seasonal cheer in Temple Bar. Don't miss carols at St Patrick's Cathedral.

### **7. Nuremberg, Germany**

If present buying makes you think of heaving department stores, maybe you should experience the magical Christkindlesmarkt (Christmas Market), in Nuremberg's Hauptmarkt. Here, 180 stalls proffer toys, trinkets, candles, gingerbread and sweets to shoppers warmed by sizzling bratwurst and mulled wine. Visit after dark, when the colored lights create a fairy-tale spectacle. Christmas shopping never looked this enchanting.

### **8. Zurich, Switzerland**

All those famed chocolate-box attractions -- mountains, snow, cobbled streets -- make Switzerland extra-appealing come Christmas. Zurich wins our vote for its oodles of Christmas markets (don't miss the one inside the train station), guided Christmas-themed city strolls, and the enchanting all-singing Christmas tree that comes alive on Werdmuhleplatz. On a tiered triangular stage covered in assorted greenery and fairy lights, a choir of local youngsters sweetly delivers Christmas carols.

### **9. Tokyo, Japan**

Christmas in Tokyo is a fairy-lit, religion-free sight to behold. Traditionally, celebrating the New Year is more important in Japan than Christmas, but this is what happens when non-Christians embrace Christmas, and with gusto: spectacularly over-the-top decorations and lights. While the lead-up is dazzling, Christmas Day itself is a fizzer as it's not a holiday. Christmas Eve is the big deal, resembling Valentine's Day in activity -- a night for couples and romance. Feasting Japanese-style involves fried chicken followed by sponge cake topped with cream and strawberries.

#### 10. **San Juan, Puerto Rico**

A small island with a big personality, Puerto Rico serves up a sunny Christmas with a salsa beat and a side dish of spit-roasted pig. Festivities last from early December to Three Kings Day on 6 January. From mid-December churches conduct dawn masses rich with Christmas carols, while exuberant roving groups of carolers travel from house to house and make merry. The big feast is held on Christmas Eve, followed by Midnight Mass. For season-setting decorations, head to City Hall on the Plaza de Armas and the fairy-lit promenade Paseo de la Princesa.

By **Pratham V Sakaria**



## Update for the day # 1275 | Over 1k women clear their first NDA Exam

Over a thousand women have cleared the National Defense Academy (NDA) examination out of a total of nearly successful 8,000 candidates. This is the first time ever that women candidates appeared for the exam conducted by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) on November 14. The results were declared on Wednesday.

The NDA will admit a total of 400 cadets next year, of which the Army will take 208 candidates, including 10 women. The Navy will have an intake of 42 candidates, including three women, while the IAF will admit 120 candidates, of which six will be women.

The NDA is modifying its infrastructure, putting in place a strong security apparatus and initiating appointments of women instructors, doctors including gynecologists', and other requisite support staff, and taking other steps to welcome the women cadets into its campus next year for the first time. Located in Pune's Khadakwasla, the NDA was formally inaugurated in 1955. It currently has a total strength of 18 squadrons, each of which comprises around 120 cadets. The institution has about 2,020 cadets at present across its six terms.

The cadets join the NDA for their pre-commissioning training after their class 12 board exams. In September, the Supreme Court had ruled that women be inducted into the NDA from this year itself, and not from next year as sought by the Centre.

By **Chaitra P**



## Update for the day # 1276 | What if you can save someone's life with your spit

What if you can save someone's life with your spit

DKMS BMST Foundation India is a non-profit organization dedicated to the fight against blood cancer and other blood disorders, such as thalassemia and aplastic anemia. Our aim is to improve the situation of patients suffering from blood cancer and other blood disorders in India and throughout the world, by raising awareness about blood stem cell transplantation and registering potential blood stem cell donors.

We also support patients from day one of their diagnoses, providing family and friends with a positive way to get involved by organizing donor registration drives that can enhance your donor search, rally community support, and provide hope.

Stem cells can be guided into becoming specific cells that can be used to regenerate and repair diseased or damaged tissues in people. Stem cells may have the potential to be grown to become new tissue for use in transplant and regenerative medicine.

Patients need donors between the ages of 18 and 60 who meet health guidelines and are willing to donate to any patient in need.

If you have serious kidney problems such as polycystic kidney disease and are over 40 years old, or chronic glomerulonephritis (any age), you will not be able to donate. If you have had a kidney removed due to disease, you may not be able to donate.

Some 62% of BMT patients survived at least 365 days, and of those surviving 365 days, 89% survived at least another 365 days. Of the patients who survived 6 years post-BMT, 98.5% survived at least another year.

In the most common type of allogeneic transplant, the stem cells come from a donor whose tissue type closely matches yours. (This is discussed in Matching patients and donors.) The best donor is a close family member, usually a brother or sister.

But only about 25% of people who need an allogeneic transplant — the type of transplant in which donor cells are used — have a sibling who is a suitable genetic match. The remaining 75%

usually look to registries of unrelated adult volunteers to find a compatible donor.

Our policy is to ask a donor to donate stem cells a maximum of three times. Medically, you can give stem cells more often; in that perspective, stem cell donation is more similar to blood donation than to organ donation. Your body quickly produces new stem cells.

Each year, approximately 18,000 people, ages 0-74, in the United States are diagnosed with life-threatening illnesses where a bone marrow transplant or umbilical cord blood transplant (also called a BMT) from a related or unrelated matched donor is their best treatment option.

By **Rithick Kumar**



## Update for the day #1277 | Conversation with Falguni Nayar

At FICCI's 94th AGM, Nykaa's founder Falguni Nayar conversed with Naina Lal Kidwai and spoke at length about her journey, gender parity at workplace, and on women wanting to enter the start-up ecosystem

Naina Lal Kidwai: You are an inspiration for women who want to not only take a mid-career but also an end-career jump into entrepreneurship. It's whole new example that you have sent out. Do you think it was easier for you, having had the experience, the contacts and the credibility that you had established?

Falguni Nayar: I personally feel when I decided to start Nykaa at 50 with no experience in beauty, no experience in technology, no experience in retail, it was all a learning curve. Even finding the right employees and investors who believed in me was tough. But it was the belief in me that I could do it, and not accepting any setbacks is what carried me through is what I can say.

My mindset was that before I turn 50 I had to start my own business otherwise I will never do it. I was 48 at that time. Instead of seeing age as a handicap, I saw it as all the experience that came with it. My professional experience came in very handy. But entrepreneurship is also about learning new things. So I would like to tell women to please educate yourselves and be very open minded.

The business landscape is perpetually evolving and one must be ready to learn and unlearn regularly. And I think this is what people with experience are not willing to do. They are not open to looking at the new landscape and see what it entails. For example, I have built a company that appeals to millennials and a lot of my workforce is millennial and I really had to sometime think of things very differently to appeal to my customers as well as my employees. And I had to be totally open to a new way of working than what I was used to.

I think these are some of the important things that one needs to do. And also one should not feel that oh I can't do this. Like I was not an engineer. I am not from IIT. Most of the entrepreneurs are like from IIT, smart, young, intelligent. Things came to them even when they were in college. They didn't seem to need training. But I felt I was ready to learn about technology, I was ready to ask stupid questions, I was ready to admit in an interview that look guys I may not talk your language but I have this vision for my business and I want to build the company like this. So I think just that confidence that you carry with yourself that you want to pursue a dream and you want to see it to the finishing line, is what's very important

Naina Lal Kidwai: Falguni, you are a great example of someone who believes in perennial learning and the humility with which you have managed it, is a great trait. For a younger woman who is

starting off, say a next generation who wants to enter the start up world, is there any different or additional advice you might offer.

Falguni Nayar: Yes for sure. I listened to other experts at a Mckinsey session on what women need to do and I really self-learned from those sessions. And that's the lesson I want to share with younger women. I think many women do not build networks. They must build the right networks and relationships that are required to succeed. No one can be a one-woman army.

By **Naren Mahesh pai**



## Update for the day #1278 | Unlimited Vacation Policy – Netflix

Several years ago, Netflix introduced a controversial employee policy that other companies would attempt to imitate. The policy eventually became known as "unlimited vacation."

Unlimited vacation, which Netflix actually refers to as the "No Vacation Policy," in essence puts employees in charge of deciding for themselves when to work and when to take a break. Advocates of the policy love the freedom and flexibility unlimited vacation offers. But opponents claim it actually undermines employee freedom, as people end up working more out of fear of losing their jobs.

So, who's right?

In his new book, *No Rules Rules*, Netflix CEO Reed Hastings tells the story of how the no vacation policy came into existence. In the process, he explains where many companies that try to implement the policy go wrong, and how a little emotional intelligence can help you make it right.

### **How it started**

Until 2003, Hastings says, Netflix allocated and tracked days off like everyone else. But a single employee's suggestion led the company to consider a change.

"We are all working online some weekends, responding to emails at odd hours, taking off an afternoon for personal time," said the employee. "We don't track hours worked per day or week. Why are we tracking days of vacation per year?"

Hastings realized he didn't have an answer.

"Today, in the information age, what matters is what you achieve, not how many hours you clock," writes Hastings. "I have never paid attention to how many hours people are working."

When it comes to how we judge performance at Netflix, hard work is irrelevant.....So, why should I care if an employee works 50 weeks a year or 48 weeks a year?"

Additionally, Hastings realized that many of the company's biggest innovations happened after people came back from vacation.

"Time off provides mental bandwidth that allows you to think creatively and see your work in a different light," explains Hastings. "If you are working all the time, you don't have the perspective to see your problem with fresh eyes."

Still, Netflix's chief executive feared that doing away with a vacation policy altogether would give rise to two potential nightmares. In the first, the office is crippled: Everyone's missing as important deadlines loom. In the second, workers turn into zombies after working years without taking a vacation.

As it would turn out, both those fears were valid.

For example, Hastings recounts how just one year after implementing its no vacation policy, the accounting department at Netflix would close their books late. The reason? A member of the team, in an attempt to avoid the annual crunch period, took off the first two weeks of January.

### **Chaos ensued.**

And then there's "Donna." Donna was a marketing manager who worked late nights and got up early. At one point, she hadn't taken a true vacation in four years. The problem? Her boss and teammates were all workaholics. Donna was afraid to take a vacation because she didn't want to appear like she wasn't pulling her weight.

"The Netflix culture has great ideals but sometimes the gap between the ideals and practice is big, and what should bridge that gap is leadership," explained Donna. "When leaders don't set a good example...I guess I'm what happens."

But while there was certainly a learning curve, there were also employees who loved the new arrangement.

Like John, an engineer who said he didn't think his bosses even knew how much vacation he had taken the year he was interviewed. (For the record: seven weeks. And it was only October.)

"I bike, I'm a musician, and my kids need me," said John. "I often think, I'm making all this money...shouldn't I be working more? But I'm getting a ton done, so I tell myself that this incredible work-life balance I have...it's OK."

Another employee said that the greatest thing about the freedom Netflix affords is "not that you can take more or less days off, but that you can organize your life in any crazy way you like--and as long as you do great work, nobody bats an eyelid."

In time, company leaders learned from their mistakes and made needed adjustments. Those learnings included outlining two vital steps for any company looking to implement its own no vacation policy.

### **Leaders have to set the example**

As a leader, you can encourage your employees to take vacations all you want. You know what's really going to get them out of the office?

Going on vacation yourself.

"In the absence of a policy, the amount of vacation people take largely reflects what they see their boss and colleagues taking," says Hastings. "Which is why, if you want to remove your vacation policy, start by getting all leaders to take significant amounts of vacation and talk a lot about it." Hastings sets the tone by himself taking six weeks of vacation a year. And since lifting the company's vacation policy, he's started talking a lot more about those vacations--"to anyone who's willing to listen."

### **Set and reinforce context**

When Netflix initially removed its vacation policy, Hastings and his colleagues hadn't thought much about the need to set context. But this was a mistake--one that led to problems like the accounting fiasco.

"When you remove a policy, employees don't know how to operate with the absence," writes Hastings. "If you don't tell them, 'Take some time off,' they won't. Others will imagine they have complete freedom to behave in wildly inappropriate ways, like going on vacation at a time that causes pain to everyone else."

He continues, "In the absence of a written policy, every manager must spend time speaking to the team about what behaviors fall within the realm of the acceptable and appropriate."

In other words, not every employee will see things the same way. What's fair and reasonable to one won't be to another. That's why communication is vital: Managers must set parameters, like how many team members can be out at a time and advance warning for lengthy vacations. And team members need to communicate, too--to let colleagues know if they'll be out of touch and make sure they won't hold up anything time-sensitive.

This communication flow must stay constant, and it's on company leaders to ensure that's the case. At Netflix, Hastings uses quarterly meetings as one opportunity to do so.

"Whenever I hear stories floating around about people not taking time off, it's time to put vacations on the agenda of a [quarterly] meeting," he writes. "This gives me an opportunity to talk about the type of environment we aspire to have and gives our leaders a chance to discuss, in small groups, techniques they use in order to achieve a healthy work-life balance for our workforce."

### **Benefits of "unlimited vacation"**

When done right, an "unlimited vacation" policy can empower your people, increase employee satisfaction, and prove to be a powerful recruiting tool. It reduces bureaucracy and administrative costs, and, according to Hastings, it helps attract and retain top talent, "especially for those who resist punching clocks."

But the best thing about removing constraints on your people's vacation time is the emotionally

intelligent message it sends.

"Most important, the freedom signals to employees that we trust them to do the right thing, which in turn encourages them to behave responsibly. ....We'd found a way to give our high performers a little more control over their lives, and that control made everybody feel a little freer."

By **Sai Manjush Y**



## Update for the day #1279 | First centurions in International Cricket

### **First-class cricket**

W. G. Grace was the first batsman to score 100 career centuries in first-class cricket, reaching the milestone in 1895. His career total of 124 centuries was subsequently passed by Jack Hobbs, whose total of 199 first-class centuries is the current record.

### **Test cricket**

The first century in Test cricket was scored by Charles Bannerman who scored 165 (before retiring hurt) in the first ever Test between Australia and England (played at the Melbourne Cricket Ground from 15 to 19 March 1877). The first century partnership in Test cricket was between W. G. Grace and A. P. Lucas, batting for England, in the first innings of the only Test match between England and Australia on the Australians 1880 tour of England, played at the Kennington Oval (6–8 September 1880)

### **One Day International cricket.**

The first One Day International (ODI) century was scored by Denis Amiss who amassed 103 runs against Australia at Old Trafford in 1972.

### **Twenty20 International cricket**

The first Twenty20 International (T20I) century was scored by Chris Gayle who amassed 117 runs against South Africa at Johannesburg in the very first match of ICC World Twenty20 tournament in 2007.

By **Kiran Kumar**



## Update for the day # 1280 | The Ashes

Australia and England first met in Test match cricket in Melbourne in 1877, but the legend of The Ashes, the symbolic trophy the two teams play for, only began in 1882.

It was 1882 when at the Oval in London, Australia won its first test match on English soil, beating its hosts by seven runs in a match that spanned two days in late August.

Four days later a mock obituary, lamenting the home side's loss, appeared in a newspaper, The Sporting Times, written by Reginald Shirley Brooks.

It read:

“In Affectionate Remembrance of English cricket, which died at The Oval on 29 August 1882. Deeply lamented by a large circle of sorrowing friends and acquaintances RIP. NB – the body will be cremated and the ashes takes to Australia.”

England's captain for the return series in Australia in 1882/83, Ivo Bligh (later Lord Darnley), promised to “regain those ashes” and then, during that tour, a group of ladies in the state of Victoria, including Bligh's future wife Florence Morphy, presented him with a six-inch terracotta urn, possibly a perfume bottle, sealed with a cork and believed to contain the ashes of a burned bail.

Lord Darnley died in 1927 and his widow presented the urn to the MCC. It was first displayed in the Long Room before it was moved to the Museum in 1953.

The urn has twice left Lord's to be taken to Australia – in 1988 as part of Australia's Bicentenary celebrations to mark the anniversary of the arrival of the first fleet of British convict ships in Sydney, and 2006/07, during that summer's Test series between the two countries.

However, the Ashes urn is not the formal trophy played for between the two sides. The MCC commissioned a trophy that has been played for in series between Australia and England since 1998/99.

An Ashes series traditionally consists of five Tests, hosted in turn by England and Australia at least once every two years. The Ashes are regarded as being held by the team that most recently won the series. If the series is drawn, the team that currently holds the Ashes retains the trophy.

There have been 71 Ashes series: Australia have won 33, England 32 and six series have been drawn.

That trophy is a larger replica of the urn in Waterford Crystal.

The matter of The Ashes was largely forgotten for two decades after the tour of Australia by Bligh's side in 1882/83, but was revived after the 1903/04 series when Pelham Warner, who captained the England side, wrote a book on the tour called 'How we recovered The Ashes'.

From that day forward, the series between Australia and England would be famously, lovingly known as The Ashes.

The first photograph of the urn appeared in The Illustrated London News of January 1921 and the words stuck to the urn are "The Ashes" followed by a six-line verse:

"When Ivo goes back with the urn, the urn;  
Studds, Steel, Read and Tylecote return, return;  
The welkin will ring loud;  
The great crowd will feel proud;  
Seeing Barlow and Bates with the urn, the urn;  
And the rest coming home with the urn."

The words are the fourth verse of a song lyric published in the Melbourne Punch from a song called 'Who's in the cricket field'.

By **Dylan Fernandes**



## Update of the Day #1281 | Christmas

### Christmas

Christmas is an annual festival commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ, observed primarily on December 25 as a religious and cultural celebration among billions of people around the world. A feast central to the Christian Liturgical year, it is preceded by the season of Advent or the Nativity Fast and initiates the season of Christmastide, which historically in the West lasts Twelve days and culminates on Twelfth Night

### Tradition Narrative

The traditional Christmas narrative, the Nativity of Jesus, delineated in the New Testament says that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, in accordance with messianic prophecies. When Joseph and Mary arrived in the city, the inn had no room and so they were offered a stable where the Christ Child was soon born, with angels proclaiming this news to shepherds who then spread the word.

### Etymology

"Christmas" is a shortened form of "Christ's mass". The word is recorded as Crīstesmæsse in 1038 and Cristes-messe in 1131. Crīst (genitive Crīstes) is from Greek Khrīstos (Χριστός), a translation of Hebrew Māšiah (מָשִׁיחַ), "Messiah", meaning "anointed"; and mæsse is from Latin missa, the celebration of the Eucharist.

### Post-Classical History

In Italy, former Saturnalian traditions were attached to Advent. Around the 12th century, these traditions transferred again to the Twelve Days of Christmas (December 25 – January 5); a time that appears in the liturgical calendars as Christmastide or Twelve Holy Days.

By **Vinod Kumar.K**



## Update for the day #1282 | Pro Kabaddi League



It is a professional Kabaddi league of India. It was launched in 2014 with the slogan "Le Panga" and is broadcast on Star Sports and Disney plus Hotstar.

The league's inception was influenced by the popularity of the Kabaddi tournament at the 2006 Asian Games. The format of the competition was influenced by the Indian Premier League. The Pro Kabaddi League uses a franchise-based model and its first season was held in 2014 with eight teams each of which has paid fees of up to US\$250,000 to join.

There were doubts over whether the Pro Kabaddi League would be successful, noting that many leagues were attempting to emulate the IPL's business model and success and that, unlike cricket, there were relatively fewer well-known players in Kabaddi. However, it was also noted that kabaddi was widely played in grassroots community settings, and could thus attract a wide variety of rural and metropolitan viewers for advertisers to target if the league gained significant traction.

The Pro Kabaddi League's rules are similar to that of the indoor team version of Kabaddi, but with additional rules to encourage more scoring.

### **Viewership**

As per the available data of the opening two weeks, Star Sports Pro Kabaddi viewership on TV increased by nearly 56% from the 2014 year's viewership. During the inaugural season, viewership was 43.5 crore (435 million) viewers, which was the second in India after the 56 crore (560 million) of IPL viewership. The online viewership also increased 1.3 crore unique visitors, which is 18.5 times than of last year's 7 lakh unique visitors. The third season which was flagged off on 30 January, recorded a surge in viewership with the opening week ratings 36 per cent higher than the week one viewership for its last season.

## Teams

Currently the teams with it's Owners are-

Bengaluru Bulls - Badri Narayan Choudhary Kota, Ananda Giri (Kosmik Global Media), Bengal Warriors - Kishore Biyani (Future Group) Dabang Delhi KC - Radha Kapoor, Jaipur Pink Panthers - Abhishek Bachchan, Patna Pirates - Rajesh V. Shah, Puneri Paltan - Rajesh Harkishandas, Doshi, Sumanlal, Babulal Shah (Suresh Kotak and Family), Nallepilly Ramaswami Subramanian, Telugu Titans - Srinivas Sreeramaneni, Goutham Reddy, Nedurmalli Mahesh Kolli (Veera Sports), U Mumba - Ronnie Screwvala (Unilazer Ventures), Gujarat Gaints - Gautam Adani (Adani Wilmar Ltd.), UP Yoddha - Kiran Kumar Grandhi (GMR Group), Tamil Talaivas - Nimmagadda Prasad, Sachin Tendulkar, Allu Arjun, Ram Charan, Allu Aravind (Magnum Sports Private Limited), Haryana Steelers - Parth Jindal (JSW Sports)

## Season Winners

2014(season 1) - Jaipur Pink Panthers  
 2015(season 2) - U Mumba  
 2016(season 3) - Patna Pirates  
 2016(season 4) - Patna Pirates  
 2017(season 5) - Patna Pirates  
 2018(season 6) - Bengaluru Bulls  
 2019(season 7) - Bengal Warriors

Four teams, Jaipur Pink Panthers, U Mumba, Bengaluru Bulls and Bengal Warriors have won the tournament once, while Patna Pirates have won the Pro Kabaddi League thrice and the only champions to have defended their title twice. The current champions are Bengal Warriors.

## Prize money

The consolidated prize money for season 7 is ₹8 crore. The champions of season 7 bagged ₹3 crore while the runners-up received ₹1.8 crore. The losing semifinalists received ₹90 lakh each and, the fifth and the sixth-placed teams earned ₹45 lakh.

## MVPs

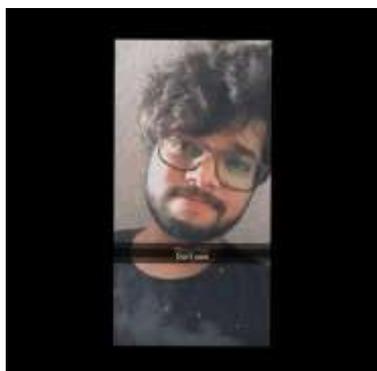
The game's fame recognised many notable players. Some of the successful Raiders are - Pardeep Narwal, Rahul Chaudhari, Deepak Niwas Hooda, Ajay Thakur, Maninder Singh. Some successful Defenders are - Manjeet Chillar, Ravinder Pahal, Fazel Atrachali, Sandeep Narwal, PO Surjeet Singh.

**Current season**

Season 8 was postponed due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and scheduled from 22 December 2021 to 20 January 2022

I would like to request all to watch ProKabaddi and support our team Bengaluru Bulls.

By **Arjun V**



## Update for the day #1283 | Booster Doses Announced, Vaccines For Children



India will start vaccinating children between the ages of 15 to 18 from January 3 next year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced in a sudden address to the nation Saturday.

Healthcare and frontline workers will be provided with "precautionary doses" from January 10 next year, he added.

People above 60 years of age who have co-morbidities will also have the option to take the booster dose on a recommendation from doctors. This will also start from January 10.

The Prime Minister said that as people prepare to welcome the new year with hope and celebration, it's also a time to be careful as the highly contagious Omicron variant is rapidly pushing up Covid infections.

He appealed to the people not to panic but be careful and alert. "Use masks and wash hands regularly," he said.

PM Modi assured the citizens that all possible preparations are in order to tackle increasing infections. He listed the number of hospital beds, oxygen beds available, and vaccination progress. "Covid isn't past us yet. Being careful is very important," he said.

"Today, the nation has 18 lakh isolation beds, 5 lakh oxygen-supported beds, 1.4 lakh ICU beds, and 90,000 special beds for children. Today, we have over 3,000 functional PSA Oxygen plants and 4 lakh Oxygen cylinders have been provided to all states," he said.

"Apart from research on the vaccine, we were also working on approval processes, supply chains, distribution, training, IT support system, and certification. With these efforts, India started vaccinating its citizens on January 16 this year," he said.

"It is a welcome decision. The next plan should be to vaccinate children above 5 years old. Pediatricians should be allowed to vaccinate these children in their clinics," Dr. Dhiren Gupta, a pediatric pulmonologist at Delhi's Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, told ANI.

"Not only we should target 13 years plus children, but also we should target 5 years old also. That should be our next plan. All pediatricians should be allowed to vaccinate these children in their clinics if we want to expedite the vaccination process," he added.

The Prime Minister said that 61 percent of the adult population in the country have been fully vaccinated and 90 percent of them have received the first dose. India started its vaccination drive on January 16 this year.

By **Harshith Mehta**



## Update for the Day #1284 | Understanding Live Commerce

Would the convenience of shopping online for clothes nudge Indians away from the “try-before-you-buy” mindset”? In 2011, that was the bet, Myntra took. It had just pivoted from personalized gifting to fashion. And it worked. Within a couple of years, Myntra became India’s leading online portal for fashion.

Now live commerce is this shiny new thing everybody’s talking about. Imagine you’re watching your favorite influencer on YouTube or Instagram. You’re looking at their gorgeous dress and you can’t stop staring at it. You want to buy that thing immediately, but the pain of finding the precise product on Google puts you off entirely. It’s a chore and you abandon the idea altogether. But it doesn’t have to be this way. If the influencer could just show you the product right there and redirect you to a payment gateway, you would buy that thing instantly.

Influencers began nudging viewers to purchase products on the live stream and it was an instant hit. Conversions started soaring. In the days before live commerce, influencers would ask their viewers to go to a specific link to finalize the purchase. Obviously, most people wouldn’t even want to move out of the website. But even those who did would often give up midway. Industry incumbents call this problem cart abandonment. They’d add something to the cart and then not buy it. However, with live commerce and with influencers nudging you to make that purchase (pairing it with additional discounts), industry stakeholders began tackling this problem in a big way. And Myntra is not going to be left behind. Right now, they’re running a pilot where influencers and other experts can hold live sessions on the platform. The hope is that through these knowledge sessions they could drive transactions i.e. if these influencers were to recommend products on the live stream and if they could buy products right there, it would be a win-win for all parties involved. This, in essence, is the playbook Myntra is likely to deploy in the months to come and live commerce may no longer be an obscure idea for most people in this country.

By **Yash M Chajjed**



## Update for the day #1285 | Amar Chitra Katha



Who and Why ?

Amar Chitra Katha is an Indian publisher of Indian comics and graphic novels. Most of its comics are based on religious legends and epics, historical figures and biographies, folktales and cultural stories. The company was founded in 1967 by Anant Pai and is headquartered in Mumbai.

The comic series was started by Anant Pai in an attempt to teach Indian children about their cultural heritage. He was shocked that Indian students could answer questions on Greek and Roman mythology, but were ignorant of their own history, mythology and folklore. It so happened that a quiz contest aired on Doordarshan in February 1967, in which participants could easily answer questions pertaining to Greek mythology, but were unable to reply to the question "In the Ramayana, who was Rama's mother?".

Indian mythology has always been a rich source of delightful children's stories, though these tales were largely published in the vernacular.

The story goes that in February 1967, when Anant Pai was watching a quiz aired on Doordarshan, he was shocked and disturbed that the participating children could answer questions on Greek mythology easily but were flummoxed when it came to a simple question from the Ramayana: "What is the name of Rama's mother?" Apparently, his nephews and nieces would write stories with British characters and settings, which showed that they were reading, or listening to, only these stories. This reportedly prompted him to start writing Amar Chitra Katha (Immortal Illustrated Stories) comics (published by India Book House) that would teach children about their own folklore, tradition, mythology and culture using simple language and eye-catching illustrations.

The first comic from Amar Chitra Katha (ACK) was Krishna, written by Anant Pai himself in 1969 and illustrated by Ram Waeerkar.

It is said that 10,000 copies of the first edition of Krishna were printed and it took about two years to sell them. The title went on to sell half a million copies.

Hand-drawn, attention to detail

Other titles followed: Shakuntala, Savitri, Nala Damayanti, Harishchandra. Because of financial constraints, these were printed using only three colours — yellow, blue and green. Full colour panels came later. Each panel had to be hand-lettered using rulers to get the spacing just right. Everything including design and layout was done by hand but the results were perfect. With the introduction of computers and the digital drawing board, however, artists were able to work much faster by creating templates. The format of each comic remained the same — a 30-page tale told compellingly, with a wealth of detail and footnotes added to explain certain terms, especially relating to customs and rituals. The comics were affordable, starting at 75 paise and then going up to ₹2.50.

With the introduction of computers and the digital drawing board, however, artists were able to work much faster by creating templates. The format of each comic remained the same — a 30-page tale told compellingly, with a wealth of detail and footnotes added to explain certain terms, especially relating to customs and rituals. The comics were affordable, starting at 75 paise and then going up to ₹2.50.

Detailed research was conducted for every story reproduced in comic form, with Anant Pai and his team poring over ancient texts to get the storyline right while his illustrators studied temple sculptures and calendar art to depict the characters' figures, clothing and settings perfectly. Many of these titles saw several reprints.

The aim was to bring out a new comic every month. These mythological tales from the epics were followed by stories of historical figures such as Rana Pratap and Mirabai and later, by adaptations of classics that included Ananda Math by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and the lives of such famous historical figures as Jawaharlal Nehru, Louis Pasteur and Hieun Tsang. In the stories on modern-day heroes, a more personal style was used to tell young readers about their early years, likes and dislikes and the milieu they grew up in.

Business challenges

Amar Chitra Katha had by then increased the frequency of new titles to one every fortnight. The company lost money during the initial years of publication, mostly due to the prejudice parents had against comics, in general. But sales soon picked up. By 1986, 50 million comics had been sold, rising to 78 million in 1993. One reason for this was the innovative strategy of offering ACK comics through the mail on annual subscriptions.

Despite this steady growth, there were blips in ACK's progress: in the 2000s, for about four-six

years, it failed to publish a single new title, surviving only on reprints! This drought was broken with a story on Mother Teresa. Changes in ACK's ownership in 2007 and the death of Anant Pai in 2011 were other major upheavals it had to contend with. At present, ACK Media Pvt. Ltd. is owned by the Future Group.

ACK publishes comics in English as well as many regional languages such as Hindi, Kannada, Bengali, Marathi, Assamese, Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu. Some titles were even translated into French, Spanish, Swahili and German. Apart from 'single' comics, ACK titles are available in hard-cover sets, and occasional bumper issues. It has branched into books on adventure, business management, personal growth, fun and inspirational activities.

#### Digital presence

Amar Chitra Katha has been active on the digital platform. The easy-to-use ACK Comics app can be downloaded on Windows, iOS and Android platforms. Amazon has made it possible for children to listen to the stories using simple voice commands to Alexa.

ACK is said to have about 450 comics in 35+ languages, which have sold more than 100 million copies to date. Of these 450 titles, stories from the Mahabharata account for 43 titles and those from Ramayana for 36. The variety of subjects on offer has only increased over the years, as the creators reach out to all corners of India for stories and biographies.

Children can apply for the Amar Chitra Katha scholarship that is available in more than 70 cities. A learning centre called ACK Alive, offering story-telling sessions, art classes, calligraphy, and vedic sciences was just launched in Hyderabad. ACK makes its presence felt at events like the World Book Fair, Comic Con, Bookaroo, and Dehradun Festival with stalls that attract people from all generations. The publisher has come a long way from the time when parents disapproved of their children reading comics. Now, during quizzes and other contests, parents compete with children to answer questions!

By **Hamsashree H S**



## Update for the day #1286 | Eminent Personalities born on 29th December

In today's update let's learn about three eminent personalities who were born on this day.

### **Kuvempu:**

Kuppali Venkatappa Puttappa (29 December 1904 – 11 November 1994), popularly known by his pen name Kuvempu, was an Indian poet, playwright, novelist and critic. He is widely regarded as the greatest Kannada poet of the 20th century. He was the first Kannada writer to receive the Jnanpith Award.

Kuvempu studied at Mysuru University in the 1920s, taught there for nearly three decades and served as its vice-chancellor from 1956 to 1960. He initiated education in Kannada as the language medium. For his contributions to Kannada Literature, the Government of Karnataka decorated him with the honorific Rashtrakavi ("National Poet") in 1964 and Karnataka Ratna ("The Gem of Karnataka") in 1992. He was conferred the Padma Vibhushan by the Government of India in 1988. He penned the Karnataka State Anthem Jaya Bharata Jananiya Tanujate.

### **Ramanand Sagar**

Ramanand Sagar (29 December 1917 – 12 December 2005) (born Chandramauli Chopra) was an Indian film director. He is most famous for making the Ramayan television series, a 78-part TV adaptation of the ancient Indian epic of the same name, starring Arun Govil as Lord Ram and Deepika Chikhalia as Sita. This TV serial was then widely watched and liked across the country. The Government of India awarded him the civilian honour of Padma Shri in 2000.

The Ramayan series was initially conceptualized to run for 52 episodes of 45 minutes each. Owing to popular demand it had to be extended thrice, eventually ending after 78 episodes. Sagar made a Luv Kush episode after receiving a call from PMO.

### **Rajesh Khanna:**

Rajesh Khanna (29 December 1942 – 18 July 2012) was an Indian actor, film producer and politician who worked in Hindi films. Dubbed the "First Superstar" of Bollywood, he consecutively starred in a record 15 successful films between 1969 to 1971. He was the highest-paid actor in Hindi cinema throughout the 1970s and 1980s. His accolades include four BFJA Awards and five Filmfare Awards, and in 2013, he was posthumously awarded the Padma Bhushan, India's third highest civilian honour.

Khanna made his debut in 1966 with Aakhri Khat which was India's first official Oscar Entry in

1967. In 2005, he was honoured with the Filmfare Lifetime Achievement Award on the 50th Anniversary of the Filmfare Awards. He was a Member of Parliament in the 10th Lok Sabha from New Delhi Lok Sabha constituency between 1992 and 1996, elected in the 1992 New Delhi by-election as an Indian National Congress candidate. He was married to Dimple Kapadia in March 1973, eight months before her debut film Bobby was released and had two daughters from the marriage. Their elder daughter Twinkle Khanna is an actress who is married to actor Akshay Kumar, while they also have a younger daughter Rinke Khanna.

Khanna died on 18 July 2012, after a period of illness. He has been honoured with a stamp and statue in his likeness, and a road renamed after him by the Prime Minister of India. In 2014, his biography Rajesh Khanna: The Untold Story of India's First Superstar by Yasser Usman was published by Penguin Books. In 2018, a one-kilometer fitness trail in Lajpat Nagar National Park was named after Khanna, which was inaugurated by his wife Dimple Kapadia.

By **Raghuram S Mallya**



## Update for the day #1287 | A reflect on 2021

### Here's a refresher on the main events that took place in the year 2021 :

1. Joe Biden becomes the 46th President of the United States of America.
2. US withdraws all troops from Afghan ending a 20-year war operation.
3. China becomes the second country to land a rover on Mars.
4. UAE's uncrewed Hope spacecraft becomes first Arabian Mission to enter Mars orbit.
5. Pandora Papers with 11.9 million leaked documents show off shore financial activities of current and former world leaders. Published by International Consortium of Investigative Journalists.
6. China launches first module to build its Tiangong Space station.
7. Fugitive diamond trader Mehul Choksi charged with Punjab National Bank Scam arrested in Dominica.
8. Argentina beats Brazil to win 2021 Copa America (Football).
9. After 4 failures, SpaceX flies, lands and recovers Starship prototype.
10. Donald Trump supporters attack US capitol, disrupts certification of 2020 presidential election. Five dead in riot.
11. Supreme court suspends implementation of three new farm laws.
12. Kyrgyztan – Tajikistan border clashes claim 55 lives, 55000 people displaced.
13. Harnaaz Sandhu from India wins Miss Universe 2021 crown.

14. Over 300 Indians, including Rahul Gandhi, Prashant Kishor, 40 journalists, politicians, 2 union ministers revealed as under Pegasus spyware surveillance.
15. Benjamin Netanyahu voted out of office, Naftali Bennett becomes the new Israeli Prime Ministe

By **Khushi Jain**



## Update for the day #1288 | Why New Year Resolutions Fail

Despite our best intentions, why is it so difficult to stick to resolutions? It doesn't matter if the resolution is to start a new habit or to give up an addiction; it all comes down to consistency and dedication.

Most people blame their failure to fulfill resolutions on a lack of time, resources, or motivation, or a loss of zeal after starting. Only about 16 percent of people are able to follow their resolutions, according to research. The majority give up within one to six weeks of starting, and many of these resolutions are repeated year after year.

There are many reasons why most New Year resolutions don't stick. The main question is: What can be done about this?

Let's take a closer look at the 6 main reasons:

### 1. **Setting unrealistic resolutions**

A resolution is about what you would like to do rather than what you 'should' do. People either establish excessively difficult objectives that quickly become unreachable, or they set relatively easy goals that they quickly become bored with. It's critical to review your resolutions to see if they're achievable. Are they quantifiable? Are they constrained by time? Are they specific in nature? Are they in line with your goals?

### 2. **Lack of accountability**

Working with a coach, mentor, or accountability partner guarantees that the proper energy and drive are present to help you be more, accomplish more, and have more. Because success is a science, we can be sure that if we follow the steps, we will achieve our goals. Avoid people who sap your energy when choosing an accountability partner, and instead work with people that elevate and encourage you, especially when you're feeling down.

### 3. **No tracking/ review**

A weekly or fortnightly review allows you to keep track of your progress and turn excuses into opportunities. What gets measured gets done, and what gets done can be improved and made a habit with the help of a good tracking system. Many of the apparent barriers are based on assumptions, inferences, judgments, overthinking, and previous points of reference. A track record of accomplishments aids in the development of resolution consistency.

### 4. **Lack of planning**

Great planning is always required for a good implementation. It is more realistic if you plan the action steps around the resolution, break them down into smaller pieces, and schedule them on the calendar. Weekly objectives and plans that are bite-sized create a sense of accomplishment rather than "Oh, I have an entire year to myself, I can always re-start next month when I have

more time." Planning also ensures that all necessary adjustments are sketched out ahead of time, along with an understanding of potential challenges. This boosts your chances of success, especially when it comes to long-term goals.

### 5. Self-doubt

Don't allow your past failures dictate your future. After you've learned from your failures, it's time to get to work. Every tiny victory should be celebrated because it motivates you to work harder for the larger ones. Being self-critical or doubtful doesn't help since it focuses all of your attention and energy on why I can't do this?" As you improve practice thankfulness, compassion, and love for yourself, and don't let a minor setback or disappointment turn into a permanent failure. Remember that progress is preferable to perfection, and that if you believe in yourself, you can achieve a lot with proper planning, execution, learning, seeking help, and appropriate coaching Continue on: you are not alone!

### 6. Unclear 'why'

A majority of people fail to achieve their objectives because their 'why' is unclear. The 'why' is what motivates people to take action and achieve goals. You may know what you want, but you won't be able to figure out how to get it unless you know why you want it. So, why are you making these resolutions? What motivates you to achieve these objectives? What motivates you to do what you do? What emotional connection does your 'why' have? All excuses go away when the purpose is strong, and one naturally switches from a fixed attitude to a growing mindset.

It is important to be mindful, take responsibility, stay committed and direct all focus on the alignment of energy, mindset and action in order to stick to one's new year resolutions. Start with a picture of your future self in your mind; make the image big and bright, feel it deeply and hold onto it as a daily reminder Don't be too hard or too easy on self and most importantly, enjoy the process of change and transformation. Remember, winners and losers have the same goals; it is what one does to fill the 'gap' in between that makes all the difference.

By **Vivek Kamath**



## Update for the day #1289 | Rewind 2021- Milestone achievements of India in 2021

2021 had its share of highs and lows, but today as the new year begins we're choosing to focus on those Indians who broke barriers and reached significant milestones in their chosen fields in the last year. From award-winning graphic novels to sporting glory, here is a round-up of landmark moments that should leave you feeling proud of the individuals that represented us so well—and hopeful that 2022 will lead to bigger and better things.

Indian illustrator Anand Radhakrishnan won an Eisner Award for the graphic novel *Blue in Green*.

Widely known as the 'Oscars of the comic world,' this year's Will Eisner Comic Industry Award in the Best Painter/Multimedia Artist category was bagged by 32-year-old Anand Radhakrishnan for his work on British author Ram V's graphic novel, *Blue in Green*. The horror-themed visual narrative presents a dark and haunting portrayal of a young musician's quest for creative genius that threatens to consume him. His artwork for the book involved a mixed media approach with graphite, ink, and acrylic making the skeletal system and digital color over it.



Sirisha Bandla became the second Indian-born woman to go into space.

Andhra Pradesh native Sirisha Bandla was among six passengers on the Unity 22 spaceflight in July 2021, a historic feat—not only because Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic is the world's first fully-crewed suborbital test flight, but also because Bandla, an aeronautical engineer, is only the second Indian-born woman to have gone into space.



Neeraj Chopra won the Olympic gold for India in Tokyo, becoming only the second Indian to have clinched an individual medal.

Chopra is a young star athlete with the power to go the distance and something tells us that his gold medal win for the javelin at the Olympics is merely the beginning. In an interview, he said- “Of course, it’s good that people know and appreciate you, but what’s bigger is that now everyone acknowledges my sport. Earlier you told them about it and still, they wouldn’t understand. Now everyone in India knows what a javelin is. I’m most happy about that.”



Harnaaz Sandhu was crowned Miss Universe.

21 years after Lara Dutta's win in 2000, Harnaaz Sandhu brought the Miss Universe crown back to India. The 21-year-old from Chandigarh is also an advocate for women’s rights and empowerment and has worked with her gynecologist mother to spread awareness about women’s hygiene at health camps across the country.

Indian documentary *Writing with Fire* made the 2022 Oscar shortlist for Best Documentary Feature.

Delhi-based filmmakers Rintu Thomas and Sushmit Ghosh made a documentary that chronicles Dalit women-run newspaper *Khabar Lahariya*'s ascent as it takes the leap from print to digital. Titled *Writing with Fire*, the documentary won a slew of awards—including the Special Jury

(Impact for Change) and Audience Award at the Sundance Film Festival—before being nominated for Best Documentary Feature at the 2022 Academy Awards, set to take place in February next year.



India bagged three nominations at the International Emmy Awards.

Primetime Emmys have evolved to become a more inclusive and diverse platform spotlighting talent outside of the U.S. and this has been lucky to the India OTT shows. The nominations for this year's International Emmys included comedian Vir Das for his Netflix stand-up comedy special, *Vir Das: For India*, actor Nawazuddin Siddiqui in the Best Performance by an Actor category for his role in Sudhir Mishra's *Serious Men* adapted from Manu Joseph's book of the same name and Ram Madhvani's crime drama web series, *Aarya*, on Disney+ Hotstar for Best Drama.

Shefali Juneja becomes the first woman chairperson of ICAO

Shefali Juneja from India was elected as the first woman Chairperson of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Aviation Security Committee. She previously served as the Joint Secretary in the Civil Aviation Ministry and used to deal with International Agreements between 2012 and 2019.

By **Varsha S V**



## Update for the day #1290 | Public Provident Fund

The wise man once said invest young” – Warren Buffett

### **Introduction to PPF**

The Public Provident Fund (PPF) is a savings-cum-tax-saving instrument in India. It was introduced by the National Savings Institute of the Ministry of Finance in 1968. The aim of the scheme is to encourage people to make small savings by offering an investment with reasonable returns combined with income tax benefits. The scheme is fully secured & guaranteed by the Central Government.

### **Importance of Public Provident Fund account**

1. PPF account is one of the best investment options for individuals who have a low-risk appetite.
2. PPF is a government-backed scheme and is also not market-linked. It offers guaranteed returns to protect the investment needs of many people.
3. As the returns from PPF accounts are fixed, they are used as a diversification tool for the investor's portfolio. Additionally, they also offer tax-saving benefits.
4. Who is eligible to invest in PPF?
5. Any Indian citizen can invest in PPF.
6. One citizen can have only one PPF account unless the second account is in the name of a minor.
7. NRIs and HUFs are not eligible to open a PPF account. However, if they have an existing PPF account in their name, then it shall remain active till its completion date. However, these accounts cannot be extended for 5 years as in the case of Indian citizens.

### **How to open a PPF account?**

A PPF account can be opened with either a Post Office or with any nationalised bank. These days, even certain private banks like ICICI, HDFC and Axis Bank among others are authorized to provide this facility. If I say in my case, I have opened it via Axis Bank and the whole process took hardly 10-15 mins.

### Important Must Know Points

1. Tenure – Minimum Lock in Period of 15 years. Can be extended in blocks of 5 years.
2. Investment Limits – Minimum of ₹500/- and Maximum of ₹1,50,000/-.
3. Deposit Frequency – At least one deposit each year for the first 15 years.
4. Interest Rate – 7.1% p.a. (present rate till 31/12/2021) compounded annually.
5. Taxation – Interest Received is tax free.
6. Additional Tax Benefit – Deduction under Chapter VI-A - Section 80C up to ₹1.5L.
7. Withdrawal – Full withdrawal only after 15 years. However, account holder can make pre-mature withdrawal from year 7 (Max 50% of the amount as at the end 4th year or end of immediately preceding year, whichever is lower)

### Pro Tip – No Charges

Invest in the first 5 days of any month. Reason being, for interest calculation, principal for a particular month is taken as the lowest closing balance on any day between 5th to end of the month.

### Example

Assuming on 05/01/2022 – Balance is ₹2,00,000/-

Investment made on 15/01/2022 - ₹1,00,000/-

No other investment or withdrawals during the month.

Principal Considered for Interest Calculation for the month of January 2022 will be only ₹2,00,000/-.

By **Yash N Jain**





**CONTACT US - SURESH & CO.**

#43/61, Surveyors Street, Basavanagudi, Bengaluru – 560004

P – (080) 26609560

**Compiled by:** Umesh Pareek and Khushi Jain

**Guided by:** Udupi Vikram

<b>D S Vivek</b>	<b>Udupi Vikram</b>
<b>Managing Partner</b>	<b>Partner</b>
<a href="mailto:vivek@sureshandco.com">vivek@sureshandco.com</a>	<a href="mailto:vikram.u@sureshandco.com">vikram.u@sureshandco.com</a>
+91 98453 78991	+91 97387 79117

**Disclaimer** -The information included above is a summary of recent developments and is not intended to be advice on any matter. SURESH & CO. expressly disclaims liability to any person in respect of anything done in reliance of the contents of these publications. Professional advice should be sought before acting on any of the information contained in it.