

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



EMERGING THOUGHTS

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Foreword

We, at SURESH & CO. are extremely glad to release the series “EMERGING THOUGHTS”. This publication is a consolidation of events occurring all around the world and ideas put together by articled assistants (Interns undergoing Chartered Accountancy course) who will be emerging as Chartered Accountants in the near future and employees.

Knowledge builds character, solves problems, makes great leaders, and provides tools and opportunities to those who hold it. Aside from using knowledge as a tool for success, one can use their knowledge to help fund the success of others.

The more knowledge we have the more power we possess. It is important for our personal and professional development and leads us to achieve success in life. Knowledge helps us in several ways but the best part is that it helps us understand ourselves as well as those around us better. It also helps us act wisely in different situations.

The response we receive from the readers is 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 often required to be leading in the name of technology and knowledge and is encouraged to think beyond essential demand of necessity. This not only helps them to purify their thoughts, enriches their vision but also gives them an opportunity to reconnaissance various things that are beyond their domain.

We at SURESH & CO., wanted to share these gems of initial thoughts as conceived by these young minds and making you all a part of this family. 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 direction. Readers are advised to do further research and analysis on the topics which they find interesting.

“A person who won’t read has no advantage over one who can’t read.”

“You will either step forward into growth, or you will step backward into safety.”

Update for the day #1291 | Pathbreaking Weapons' From 2021 That Will Greatly Boost Indian Military's Firepower

2021 was an eventful year for the Indian military with evolving security dynamics in the neighbourhood. Though the standoff with China along the LAC and a devastating second wave of Covid-19 tested the forces, positive developments too dotted the year gone by.

As the year is closed, here is a rewind of the path-breaking weapon systems that the Indian military finally got to improve its operational combat capability.

The French Combat Aircraft – Rafale

Dassault Aviation's Rafale is a twin-jet, 4.5th generation combat aircraft capable of carrying out a wide range of short and long-range missions. Ground and sea attacks, reconnaissance, high-accuracy strikes, and nuclear strike deterrence are all possible with this advanced combat jet.

Besides the Meteor air-to-air beyond visual range missiles, the Rafale has powerful weapons such as SCALP air-to-ground laser-guided ammunition that can target the enemy from a distance of over 300 kilometres and HAMMER precision terrain hugging ammunition that can hunt and destroy high-value enemy targets from a distance of 60 kilometres.

All these specifications make it an ideal match for India's requirements against its adversarial neighbours. The Rafale aircraft were deployed for patrolling in eastern Ladakh and other fronts during the height of the India-China faceoff along the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

The Russian Air Defence System – S-400

One of the biggest and most significant military procurements for India in 2021 was the S-400 air defence, missile system supplied by Russia. This induction invited American disapproval, with Washington threatening to impose Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA), a law that allows it to sanction a country that purchases this Russian system. India took the risk of being alienated by the United States in order to complete the purchase of the S-400 system due to its ability to help strengthen its defences.

These missiles have a maximum range of 120 kilometres and can kill mobile targets like fighter planes with pinpoint accuracy.

American MQ-9 Reaper Drones

Besides French Rafale and the Russian S-400, another significant addition to the Indian arsenal is going to be the American MQ-9 Reaper drones. Earlier in 2020, India had leased the MQ-9B Sea Guardian variant of the Reaper drone for maritime awareness and surveillance operations. New Delhi signed a contract for the procurement of 30 MQ-9 drones, 10 for each service, after being impressed with its operational performance.

It has since been stuck in limbo due to cost and process issues. The MQ-9 Reaper is capable of both remotely-controlled operation and autonomous flights. The MQ-9, also called Predator-B,

is a hunter-killer drone that succeeds the MQ-1 Predator, which was primarily employed for Intelligence, Reconnaissance, and Surveillance (IRS).

It's made for long-range, high-altitude operations. Because of its long loiter time, wide range of sensors, multi-mode communications suite, and precise weaponry, the UAV has a unique capability to perform strike, coordination, and reconnaissance against high-value, transitory, and time-sensitive targets. This drone, once inducted, would add more teeth to India's surveillance efforts, on the seas as well as at land borders.

With China expanding vigorously along the LAC as well as making unwarranted forays into the Indian Ocean region, the Reaper will enhance India's target and strike capability. It could also be deployed along the western border with Pakistan that perpetually remains volatile.

Indigenous Light Combat Aircraft – Tejas

One of the most significant and long-awaited procurements for the Indian military is its homegrown light combat aircraft (LCA). Earlier this year, a long-awaited contract for 83 Tejas Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) was inked with the state-run Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL). Tejas is a single-engine supersonic fighter with minimal weight and excellent agility.

It is equipped with a quadruplex digital fly-by-wire Flight Control System (FCS). The delta-winged aircraft is designed for 'air combat' and 'offensive air support' with secondary roles of 'reconnaissance' and 'anti-ship' missions. Advanced composites are used extensively on this aircraft, resulting in a high strength-to-weight ratio, long fatigue life, and low radar signals. The project manager for the development of LCA is the Aeronautical Development Agency.

By Sai Rahul



Update for the day #1292 | Great Indian Sugar Dispute.

Sugar is extremely important to India. Not just because it's an integral part of our diet, but also because many Indians depend on sugarcane for subsistence. The industry alone employs anywhere between 35–50 million people. We are the second-largest producer of sugar in the world and we are by far the largest consumer.

Needless to say, the government has had good reason to support the industry in any way they can. Apart from favourable policies, the central government has also offered incentives/subsidies to farmers and other stakeholders in the sugar industry alike. Take, for instance, the government's policy of providing a 'Fair and Remunerative Price' (FRP).

The policy mandates buyers to compensate farmers by extending a minimum support price. State governments also impose their own support price beyond the FRP and by all accounts, policymakers have done a lot to promote sugarcane farming in India. There's no denying this aspect.

However, this kind of unabashed support hasn't exactly gone unnoticed. India's international rivals have been watching these developments unfold and they've been seething in the background. Primarily three countries—Brazil, Australia and Guatemala. All of them have accused India of implementing policies that incentivise overproduction and distort sugar prices. And since they also happen to be sugar-producing countries themselves, you can see why they would be upset.

But isn't this temper tantrum a futile exercise? How can they stop India from supporting a domestic industry? Well, technically they can't do much on their own. Unless that is they get the WTO involved.

WTO or the World Trade Organisation is a multi-nation forum where governments come together to negotiate trade agreements and set out principles that help facilitate global trade. Every member nation decides to abide by these principles because, in theory, this aids their well being. However, if there is an errant country that violates these agreements, then other nations can take them to task. Which is kind of what happened in this case.

Brazil, Australia and Guatemala have all registered formal complaints against India's intervention and supported it with documentary evidence. They've contended that India has been providing excessive financial support to stakeholders in the industry—beyond what is deemed acceptable according to rules laid out in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

And after two years of pitched legal battle, a WTO panel has concluded that India has in fact violated the GATT and they've asked India to make amends and withdraw the controversial financial assistance program within 120 days.

But as things stand India is in no mood to surrender. The government has stated unequivocally that they intend to appeal the ruling while also maintaining that they won't be tweaking their policies right now.

**But what if India fails to course-correct or refuse to compensate these other countries?
What happens then?**

Well, in such a case, the countries can then retaliate by imposing restrictions of their own. For instance, they can restrict the import of sugar from India by raising duties or they could retaliate in an entirely different sector if they believe such retaliation will be more meaningful.

So yeah, right now India still has a chance to argue its case, but if the appeal doesn't do much, then we may have to address their concerns.

By Tejus D



Update for the day #1293 | Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Memorial

“Don’t read success stories, you will only get messages. Read failure stories, you will get some ideas to get success..”

- APJ Abdul Kalam



India’s greatest leader, legend, former president and a distinguished scientist Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam’s memorial greets the travellers in Rameshwaram island.

Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam’s memorial hall was inaugurated by Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi on 27th July, 2017.

Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam memorial is constructed in 2.11 acres of land and it’s end goal is to pay tribute to India’s rocket man. The memorial reflects a fine mix of the Indian and Mughal engineering.

The passage of the landmark delineates the India Gate, gathered with a Chettinad entryway that looks like the passageway entryway of the Brihadeeswara Temple in Thanjavur, while the principle arch of the building is an imitation of the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

The yellow stones that are utilized as a part of its development was conveyed from nearer to Pakistan. Though, sand, water and different materials had been gotten from all finished India. Subsequently, it’s an image of national joining.

Each stone put in the dedication speaks to Kalam’s fantasy of United India. He had constantly appreciated the diverse parts of India’s way of life, so to pay respect to Kalam’s life, they have all been coordinated in this landmark.

Dr. Kalam’s lessons survive in this memorial and touches off the faith in oneself to every one of those individuals who visit here. In the insides of the commemoration, there are four corridors that mirror the different aspects of Dr Kalam’s life, including the Pokhran atomic test.

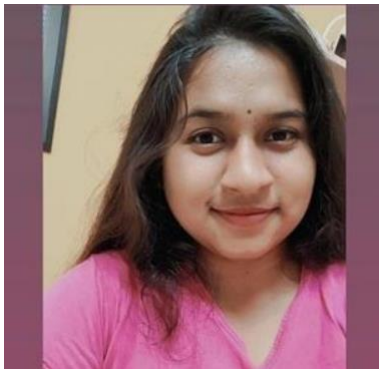
There's even shown imitations of rockets and rockets that the late expert researcher dealt with, in order to praise his commitment to space science.

Initiated in 2016, the bronze life estimate statue of Abdul Kalam had been moved and introduced behind the commemoration.

This impeccable landmark, has turned into a milestone in the main residence of the general population's President, that would keep on igniting youthful personalities to think beyond practical boundaries.

This vacation spot in Rameshwaram is an absolute necessary visit in Rameshwaram.

By Charvika Rathore



Update for the day #1294 | Why Disney spends Billions on real estate

There is nothing small about Walt Disney World. It is made up of four separate theme parks in Lake Buena Vista, Fla., near Orlando, with combined annual attendance of 56 million. The resort sprawls across 25,000 acres, an area nearly twice the size of Manhattan. A steel beam needed to build an “Avatar” attraction last year was so massive that Disney had to borrow crawler-transporters from NASA.

Now Disney World — and Disney’s global vacation empire — is about to get much, much bigger. With its television business facing significant challenges in the streaming age, and lots of popular movie franchises to put to use, Disney is spending billions to supercharge its theme park division, which has emerged as a surprisingly strong moneymaker.

For the 2018 fiscal year, Walt Disney Parks and Resorts had an operating profit of \$4.5 billion, an increase of more than 100 percent from five years earlier. For comparison, Disney Media Networks, home to ESPN and ABC, had a profit of \$6.6 billion, a 3 percent decline.

Each of Disney’s six theme park resorts around the world is undergoing major expansion, along with Disney Cruise Line. Michael Nathanson, a longtime media analyst, estimates that Disney will spend \$24 billion on new attractions, hotels and ships over the next five years. That’s more than Disney paid for Pixar, Marvel and Lucasfilm combined.

“It can’t just be special — it has to be spectacular,” Bob Chapek, Disney’s theme park chairman, said during a hard-hat tour of a 14-acre construction site at Disney World where “Star Wars”-themed rides, shops and restaurants were taking shape. Overhead, crews were sculpting spires designed to look like the petrified remnants of once-towering trees on a distant planet.

Disney faces an enviable challenge: Even with steady price increases for peak periods — single-day peak tickets at Disneyland in California now run \$135 — visitor interest often exceeds capacity at some properties. “You can only let so many people in a park before you start to impede on satisfaction level,” Mr. Chapek said.

So, Disney’s expansion plan is more ambitious than building a “Black Panther” roller coaster here or introducing an “Incredibles” character there.

The goal is transformation — adding significant capacity to Disney’s most popular parks (Disneyland, Tokyo DisneySea) and giving others major upgrades (Epcot, Disney Studios Park at Disneyland Paris) to help attract visitors more evenly throughout the empire.

An abundance of popular Disney film franchises makes this kind of mega-expansion possible, Mr. Chapek noted. “Frozen” and Marvel rides are coming to multiple resorts.

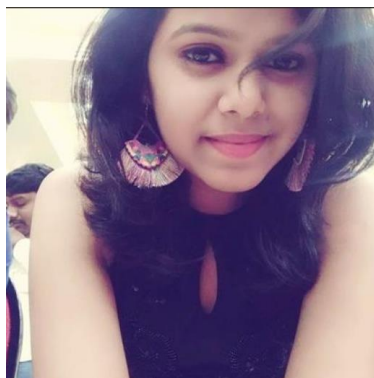
In terms of attracting crowds and creating excitement, nothing quite compares to the “Star Wars” franchise.

In 2019, Disney World and Disneyland opened matching 14-acre “lands” called Star Wars: Galaxy’s Edge. On one lavish attraction, guests will board an Imperial Star Destroyer, where roughly 50 animatronic stormtroopers await in formation. On another, guests will be able to pilot an interactive Millennium Falcon.

“It’s a personalized intergalactic ride — live your own ‘Star Wars’ story,” said Scott Trowbridge, the Disney creative executive overseeing the Galaxy’s Edge projects. “If you crash into a wall, that’s what you will see out the cockpit window.”

The Millennium Falcon ride will use real-time video rendering technology invented by Industrial Light & Magic that responds to the way guests use 200 cockpit controls.

By Smitha R



Update for the day #1295 | Vanilla Strategy

A Vanilla strategy refers broadly to one that is simple and straightforward, with little complexity. Vanilla strategies can be a common or popular approach to investing by ordinary investors or certain decisions made in business. Although the approach is relatively basic, many investors succeed by sticking with a simple, proven strategy such as passive investing through broad exchange-traded funds.

Similarly, businesses can succeed through plain vanilla strategies such as focusing business lines in areas where there is a clear competitive advantage. In business, however, a vanilla strategy must allow for some innovation as a competitive advantage can weaken over time for many products and services.

Understanding a Vanilla Strategy

Vanilla strategies tend to be simple, practical, and often conservative. Generally, a vanilla strategy makes sense when explained in a few short sentences.

For example, to build an income portfolio, buy and hold dividend-paying stocks with a history of paying dividends for 10 years or more. Compare this relatively simple explanation to something like an iron condor options strategy, and you can see why it is considered to be a vanilla strategy.

Vanilla strategies are not diminished by their simplicity - they are simply not as flashy or aggressive as other approaches. More importantly, it can actually be difficult to implement and stick to a vanilla strategy long term.

When speaking about investment strategies, a vanilla strategy can often be outperformed by any number of short-term strategies. Over the long term, however, a vanilla strategy will generally see less under-performance than more aggressive strategies do in challenging markets.

Business Usage

Similarly, a simple, conservative approach in business may not catch the attention of the financial media compared to a highly leveraged tech start-up, but investors will eventually appreciate the strong balance sheet that these companies employing vanilla strategies usually have.

Elements of vanilla strategies in business include things like focusing resources where the competitive advantage is strongest, using only moderate debt financing to fund growth, and avoiding overdependency on a single client or product.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- A vanilla strategy refers to a simple, yet effective approach that is not overly complicated or nuanced.
- In investing, vanilla strategies can include passive index investing or the use of a roboadvisor.
- For businesses, simple vanilla strategies are often cost-effective ways of getting the job done with overly-complicating matters.

By Varsha N K



Update for the day #1296 | How did Switzerland Manage to Remain Neutral During WWII?

Switzerland, a small and beautiful country situated within the Alps has been in a state of perpetual neutrality since the major European powers decided so during the 1815 Congress of Vienna which concluded the Napoleonic Wars. Switzerland has used its state of neutrality to remain withdrawn from warfare for a long time.

But how did Switzerland manage to remain neutral even with the Second World War erupting around it?

To keep the country safe from the Allies and Axis powers, the Swiss used a strategy called “armed neutrality,” requiring maintaining a sizable army to isolate itself within the country’s frontiers and allowing it to defend against foreign incursion.

Yet the country was not been entirely without military activity during the Second World War. Shortly after the start of the war, the Swiss government mobilized its entire army in just three days. Over 430,000 combat troops and 210,000 in support troops, including 12,000 women, were mobilized.

Though the Germans and Italians had a detailed plan to invade Switzerland, the plan was never enacted and Operation Tannenbaum was cancelled.

The Swiss transformed its strategy from defending all its borders to concentrating its forces between the Alps, a plan called National Redoubt. The plan worked on the basis that the Swiss army would give up control of the populated central areas and direct its focus to the main transportation links.

Despite the high mobilization of its forces, Switzerland served as an espionage camp for both sides. In 1942, the United States even established the Office of Strategic Services in the city of Bern. The Office helped develop tactical plans for Allied invasions of Salerno in Italy and the islands of Corsica and Sardinia.

Though the country was in a neutral state and refused to negotiate its neutrality, both the Allies and Axis powers violated Switzerland’s territorial integrity during the war.

For instance, during the German invasion of France, Switzerland’s airspace was violated more than 190 times. Some incidents occurred when the Swiss attempted to shoot down at least a dozen Luftwaffe aircraft between May 10 and June 17, 1940.

Switzerland used a smart strategy where they would force German aircraft to land on Swiss airfields after potential airspace violations. This continued even after Hitler warned them against interfering with his troops.

Meanwhile, Hermann Göring, the Luftwaffe commander, sent saboteurs to destroy the Swiss airfields, but they were captured before they could cause any damage.

Similar incidents occurred when Allied forces broke the Swiss air perimeter, with a total of 36 American and British airmen killed while flying over Swiss territory.

On October 1, 1942, the first American bomber was shot down by the Swiss. Only three of the crew survived. Moreover, many Allied troops that were captured by the Swiss were interned, while over a hundred Allied aircraft were held within Switzerland until the end of the war. Only 940 American attempted to escape into France.

In 1944, a United States representative claimed that the airspace breaches were likely due to navigational errors during bombing raids over Berlin.

In addition, the Swiss actively maintained its trade links with Germany to prevent it from invading the small country. On April 1, 1944 this led to an Allied bombing of the town of Schaffhausen, killing 40 people and destroying over 50 buildings, including some factories producing parts to be exported to Germany.

The allies claimed the attack was a mistake, clarifying that they intended to attack the town of Ludwigshafen am Rhein, 176 miles (284 km) away. Nonetheless, the attack prompted the Swiss to switch to a zero-tolerance policy for any airspace violations and authorized attacks against American aircraft.

Despite both the Axis and Allied powers pressuring Switzerland to not trade with the other side, Switzerland continued trading with Germany to dissuade them from invading. In the meantime, Switzerland grew wealthier, with 1.3 billion francs worth of gold being sold to Switzerland by the German Reichsbank in exchange for Swiss francs.

By mobilizing its army, maintaining a strict neutrality policy, actively defending against foreign trespasses, and trading with Germany, the Swiss were able to escape the devastation that the Second World War brought to much of the European continent.

By Sushmitha S



Update for the day #1297 | Post-pandemic, flexi-work will boost commercial real estate!

Looking back at the past two years, Covid-19 was most definitely a curveball that companies and individuals alike had to adapt to. Prior to Covid-19, the real estate industry was at its peak. However, with the imposition of two lockdowns, the real estate sector faced a bit of a slowdown, but the industry has still managed to overcome these challenges through:

An inbound interest in Indian real estate

At the start of 2021, the World Economic Outlook report by the IMF (International Monetary Fund) that highlighted the specificity of how India is rebounding and will be on track to build a five trillion-dollar economy. The financial impetus by the government, increasing FDIs (foreign direct investments) and boost to manufacturing are three endeavours that have been undertaken to ensure the country reaches this goal.

These efforts, in turn, have led to exponential growth in the commercial real estate sector given that large-scale MNCs are now looking to set up their manufacturing base as well as secondary offices across the Indian subcontinent. This push has resulted in world-renowned brands like Tesla, Apple, and Samsung setting up their offices across India.

The burgeoning growth of Tier II and Tier III markets as commercial hubs

The pandemic induced lockdowns led to the subsequent return of a large part of India Inc to their hometowns, spanning tier 2 and 3 India. Even as we move towards an increased sense of normalcy each day, employees have realised that staying close to home helps them be more present, maintain a work-life balance, as well as be more productive.

This observation has been supported by employers and recruiters because it allows them to diversify their base to different markets, while also slashing their expenditure on rentals in metro cities.

Many employees returned to their hometowns but soon realised the need to socialise with other employees and work in a structured environment. This served as a window for MNCs, developers, co-working players to build their presence in the smaller regions of the country. These regions offered low rental rates, subsidised development costs, and most importantly a booming market of opportunities.

Hybrid working: The middle-ground where employers and employees meet

Since India had the potential to accommodate new businesses, India's work environment strongly pivoted during the pandemic in 2020-21 either to work from home, hybrid work models, or remote working strategies. With an influx of business opportunities, the commercial real estate sector of the country repurposed its offerings according to the growing need for healthcare, technology, and also shifts in attitudes.

There exist various legs to commercial real estate, but the post-pandemic reality is converging it all into one as offices could now exist in a mall or a hotel. The co-working players and other offices are on their toes to automate the property systems through contactless solutions like automated dispensers, retina scanners, touchless doors, and so on. They have provisions for basic healthcare facilities and ensure the rules and regulations of stringent Covid-19 protocols are followed.

What does the future hold?

As we make our way into 2022, accessibility to booster shots, acquired immunity, and progress in medical science will invariably reflect on the positive growth for office space in India. According to Knight Frank's Outlook 2022 report, IT companies alone have hired around 2.6 lakh new employees from April 2020 to September 2021.

It means that while the work from home strategy was the most accepted way of work at the start of the pandemic, not many companies and employees are keen on continuing with the same. This massive shift in behaviour calls for the need for immediate office spaces.

Since the world of work is seeing constant changes, flexi-spaces have become a reliable option for employees and companies as they provide individual flexibility and will surely define the future of office in India for the next few years. In my opinion, we must remain optimistic even in the face of an anticipated third wave and realign the real estate sector to stay ahead of the curve.

Given the boom in hybrid work culture and mass vaccination across the country, the co-working sector will expect an increase in demand from large organisations, startups, and freelancers as employees are eager to return to the office. In 2022, flexi-space providers will be key growth drivers for commercial real estate with their on-demand, modern, digitised and quality workspace solutions.

By Chandana C



Update for the day #1298 | From Rs. 100 to a 5000 crore empire - The Haldiram's Story!



Haldiram's is one of the most trusted brands in the Indian community, both nationally as well as internationally. But the journey from a small shop in Bikaner to International outlets has spanned decades and was ripe with various hurdles.

Even though Haldiram's has a brand value of over USD 3 billion (21,000 crore), it is surprising that the founding generation did not even finish their schooling. This should be a source of inspiration to entrepreneurs that the ability to learn, strong business acumen and instincts are skills that build industry leading businesses.

The Origins

The origin of Haldiram's predates even the Indian independence. Ganga Bhisen Agrawal, fondly called Haldiram by his mother, started his journey from a small chawl in Bikaner. Ganga Bhisen learned the special recipe used by his aunt to make soft and thick Bhujia. This recipe came in handy to Ganga Bhisen, when he joined the family snack stall in Bikaner.

Ganga Bhisen further innovated the recipe. He started making Bhujia from moth (lentil) flour instead of the traditional besan flour. This change allowed bhujia to become the ubiquitous snack that it is.

Another change that he made was that he made the bhujia thinner using a finer mesh. He also knew how to market the product differently. He named it 'Dungar Sev' after the popular Maharaja of Bikaner. That differentiated the products and offerings from his grandfather's brand. The new offering was an instant hit among the customer and he started selling as much as 200 kgs per week.

Venturing alone

In 1944, a disagreement in the family ended with Haldiram and his wife, Champa Devi to move away from the family and forge their own path. They took nothing from the family home apart from a pair of clothes.

His wife would prepare moong daal, another popular namkeen and Haldiram would sell the namkeen on the streets of Bikaner. They somehow made ends meet for the family by doing this.

A Friend in Need

One day, when Haldiram was out selling moongdal, he had a chance encounter with his friends Allabelli. A childhood friend that Haldiram has helped financially years ago. After hearing about the plight of the family, Allabelli gave Haldiram Rs. 100. It was nothing short of a blessing for Haldiram.

The money helped Haldiram to rent a home in Bikaner. But they still did not have the money for renting a shop. He had to go and sell the moongdal by going to the market on foot.

Founding Stone of Haldiram's

In 1946, Haldiram and his wife set up their first shop in Bikaner. Named Haldiram Bhujia, they also started selling Bhujia using the recipe Haldiram had perfected.

Very soon, the shop had become the go to place for people from all over Bikaner. Now the entire family could live comfortably from the earnings of the shop.

Expansion

Haldiram gave a serious thought to the expansion of his brand outside Bikaner when he attended a family wedding in Kolkata. He took his trademark Bhujia snack as gift in the wedding. After receiving great feedback from all the guests and insistence to open a shop in Kolkata, Haldiram finally decided to set up a shop in Kolkata.

The next generation did not expand the business outside of the Bikaner and Kolkata locations.

The Foundation of the Empire

Grandsons of Ganga Bhisen – Manoharlal and Shiv Kishan – took the business to Delhi and Nagpur respectively. Haldiram's' first shop in Delhi was set up in Chandni Chowk (Delhi) and struck the right chord with customers. People flocked to the sweets and snack manufacturer's shop.

Unfortunately, just when it seemed that the business would grow bigger than ever before, the shop and apartment were burned down during the 1984 Sikh riots. Manohar Lal did not give up even then. After sending his family back to Bikaner he rebuild the business again brick by brick. Having gone to the college, unlike his predecessors, Manohar Lal has quite a sharp mind for optimizing processes. This was an opportunity for him to start afresh and lay the proper foundation for an empire.

They started with rebuilding their shop. Once business picked up, they turned their apartment into a factory overnight, where the entire family pulled long sleepless nights, trying to keep up with demand. Soon, the Chandni Chowk location was not enough and Manohar Lal began looking for factory space to begin large-scale production. The first factory was set up in the late '80s.

Surpassing foreign brands

From a humble shop in Bikaner to its own retail chain stores & restaurants, Haldiram's has made its mark in the food (snack) industry in India. The company was then divided into 3 areas of operation in Delhi, Nagpur, and Kolkata.

With over 400 delightful products, Haldiram's has included cookies, sherbets, papads, pickles, and western snacks into its domain. In 2003, Haldiram's started developing convenience foods to be marketed to consumers. 11 years down the line, Haldiram's ranked 55th among India's most trusted brands as per the 'Brand Trust Report'. Haldiram's revenue mark crossed Rs. 4,000 crores in FY16. It became twice the size of HUL's packaged food division.

It also grew larger than the Indian turnover of Domino's and McDonald's put together! In 2017, the company was crowned as the country's largest snack company, outperforming PepsiCo in sales. It superseded all its domestic and international competitors!

By Rithik Jain



Update for the day #1299 | World's largest glass bridge- Zhangjiajie Glass Bridge

This suspension bridge began to take shape in 2015 with designs from Israel-based Architect Haim Dotam and Urban Designers with the vision of holding 800 people at a time.

At the time of completion, it was the tallest and longest glass bridge in the world. Located in the Zhangjiajie National Forest Park, this bridge is situated across the canyon caused by two mountain cliffs.



In its design and construction, this glass bridge has broken ten world records, one of them being the 935ft bungee jump provisions made to create the world's largest jump.

The bridge itself is 980ft above the ground, measuring a total length of 1,410ft with a width of 20ft. When building the bridge, engineers built four pillars on the edge of the wall canyon to correctly complete this stunning glass bridge.

Constructed with a metal frame and 120 glass panels, the Zhangjiajie Bridge allows you to take in the breathtaking views surrounding you. Each glass panel is made from 3-layered, 2-inch thick tempered glass, causing no concern for any breakages.

In August 2016, the Zhangjiajie Glass Bridge was opened to the public, making it the largest glass bridge that had ever been constructed. 13 days after opening, the bridge was closed down by authorities.

The scale of architectural design and beauty meant thousands of people came to see this awe-inspiring development. Projected figures predicted around 8000 visitors per day, but this was exceeded by 10x the amount with reports of 80,000 visitors.

Due to this high volume, the bridge was closed to ensure the construction could withstand the extra weight as it was initially only developed with 800 people on the bridge at one time.

The bridge finally reopened 28 days later, on September 30th, and has been open ever since. Fast-forward to today, and there has been a longer glass bridge designed and constructed in the scenic area of China's Hebei province, leaving the Zhangjiajie Glass Bridge with the title as the highest glass bridge in the world.

By Vidya Shree



Update for the day #1300 | Left wing and Right wing Politics

“Just because you don’t take interest in politics doesn’t mean politics won’t take interest in you”.
– Pericles (Greek statesman).

Each and everyday, be it in our social media feeds, or newspapers or on news, we hear the words left wing and right wing, but most of us ignore what those words actually symbolise. Lets educate ourselves into what the terms actually mean and how it affects our life.

Right wing and Left wing politics.

The term right-wing can generally refer to the section of a political party or system that advocates free enterprise and private ownership, and typically favours socially traditional ideas.

The left–right political spectrum is a system of classifying political positions characteristic of left-right politics, ideologies and parties with emphasis placed on social equality and social hierarchy.

Origins:

In the year 1789, the members of the French National Assembly met for drafting the Constitution. They were debating about how much authority will King Louis XVI have. The debate raged and the anti-royalist revolutionaries gathered to the presiding officer's left while the conservative, aristocratic supporters gathered to the right.

In the 1790s, newspapers began making references to the progressive left and the traditionalist right of the French National Assembly. These distinctions vanished under the rule of Napoleon Bonaparte.

In 1791, the French National Assembly was replaced by the French Legislative Assembly. The innovators sat on the left, the moderates in the centre and conscientious defenders of the constitution at the right and the arrangement continued till 1792.

During 1814-1815, political clubs were formed again and ultra royalist (French political fraction) began sitting at the right, constitutionals at the centre while independents on the left. At that time, the terms left and right were not used to mark the political ideology of the individuals and was limited to the seating legislature.

Differences between Right Wing and Left Wing

Left-Wing	Right-Wing
Left-wing politics is more liberal in its approach and outlook	Right-wing politics are more conservative.
Left-wing economics policies involve reducing income equality, increasing tax rates for the wealthy, and government spending on social programs and infrastructure	Its economic policies involve low taxes, less regulation on businesses by the government

Those belonging to the left-spectrum of politics believe that society will benefit from an expanded role for the government	Right-wing ideologies believe that the best outcome for society is delivered when individual rights and civil liberties are paramount with limited involvement of the government
Left-wing politics is characterized by an emphasis on equality, fraternity, progress, and reform	Right-wing politics is characterized by ideas of authority, hierarchy, tradition, and nationalism
Left-wing nationalism is based on social equality, popular sovereignty, and national-determination. It associates itself closely with national liberation movements	Right-wing nationalism is influenced by Romantic Nationalism where the state derives its legitimacy from the culture it governs, including, language, race, and custom "born" within this culture
Left-wing politics is traditionally against religious institutions and believe that state and religion must be separate from each other (Secularism)	Right-wing politics have always found supporters who believe that religion should play an expanded role in society.
Populist ideas in the left-wing do not include horizontal exclusion and will rely more on egalitarian ideals.	Populism is a recurring theme in right-wing political circles. Populism is a political approach that appeals to ordinary people who feel that their rights are ignored.

Some areas where the differences between the two ideologies clash:

1. The Death Penalty

Many on the left believe that the death penalty is barbaric and does not deter crime. Meanwhile, the right generally believes that certain crimes deserve death as a punishment, somewhat akin to the "an eye for an eye" doctrine. A debate over the fairness of the criminal justice system has emerged, with the left asserting that many on death row may be innocent.

Opponents of the death penalty cite the following reasons for their position:

- Several people on death row were innocent and have been exonerated. The justice system is not perfect, and it would be wrong to kill an innocent person.
- It is inhuman to take a life, even that of a murderer.
- Minorities and poor people are given the death penalty in disproportionately larger numbers, so criminals with means can escape death row. It's not so much about how heinous the crime is but how much the defendant can afford to spend on lawyers.

Proponents believe that:

- The death penalty is an effective deterrent against crimes, especially crimes of a heinous nature.
- The death penalty is an appropriate punishment for perpetrators of heinous crimes. The alternative — life in prison — would only mean spending taxpayer dollars to keep them confined, fed, and provide healthcare services to them.
- Victims and their families deserve justice; often they can only get closure when the perpetrator is put to death.

2. Gay Rights

Almost without exception, those on the left support gay marriage, and other gay rights issues like adoption rights and non-discrimination at work or in business.

Most on the right believe marriage is strictly an institution based on the union of a man and a woman and see gay unions as an aberration from the norm.

By Suhas N



Update for the day #1301 | Rise of Electric Two Wheeler Vehicles in India

Indian two-wheeler market, the largest in the world, has grown exponentially. However, the wind of change is blowing hard. The recent disruptions, because of environmental compulsions and economic viability, have driven the segment to a crossroad and it is definitely ready for a complete transformation.

The emerging market and industry trends are heralding a new beginning. And its electric! With the falling battery prices, electric bike prices are becoming comparable to their petrol counterparts in terms of operating cost. Efforts at charging infrastructure, battery swapping and localisation of parts also are gaining momentum.

Here comes a few statistics

Sales of electric two-wheelers in India increased 132% in 2021, the Society of Manufacturers of Electric Vehicles (SMEV) said in a new report. A total of 233,971 electric two-wheelers were sold during the year as compared to 100,736 a year ago.

Hero Electric, with 34% of the market share, was the top seller, followed by Okinawa (22%) and Ather (12%)—the other two companies with a double-digit market in the top ten.

Electric two-wheelers that can go beyond 25km per hour and require a full drivers licence, grew at an even higher 425% as compared to low-speed counterparts which grew only by 24%.

Low-speed electric two-wheelers move at under 25kmph and require no licence or registration. According to SMEV, low-speed electric two-wheelers were in demand until 2020, when they accounted for 70% of sales. However, interest waned in 2021, especially in the October-December quarter when their market share dropped to less than 15%.

SMEV has attributed this to the subsidies given to high-speed electric two-wheelers under the FAME 2 policy that have made them more affordable than low-speed two wheels.

FAME 2 or Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid &) Electric Vehicles in India is an incentive-based scheme by the government to subsidise the making and buying of electric vehicles including two-wheelers. According to Sohinder Gill, director general of SMEV, the recent changes in EV policy through FAME 2 were game-changing for the EV industry.

At Present

There has been a lot of new Electric Vehicle manufacturers some of them are OLA, Simple One, Revolt and our own bengaluru's Bounce infinity. Last few years the price of EV's were very costly and was not affordable by everyone.

Due to increased competition every manufacturer is coming up with a price which is affordable to all class of people. Ola is giving a range of around 130Kms for a one full charge which is a great advantage for daily commuters. Bounce have come with a price which is around 70000 which will be easily affordable by everyone.

We can see that demand for EVs are increasing and this will benefit the environment as it reduces the pollution caused by Petrol and Diesel vehicles. Even the per km cost in EVs are considerably low when compared to petrol and diesel engine vehicles.

By Adithiyya J S



Update for the day #1302 | Biggest working capital Scandal

Greensill Capital a fintech company - which was valued at \$ 3.5 billion, on 8 March 2021 filed for insolvency. As Tokio Marine management, the parent company of Greensill's insurance provider said it would no longer extend insurance.

What happened to such a big company and why did it file for insolvency?

Greensill Capital is a "supply chain financing (SCF)" company. Supply chain financing is nothing but factoring, which means-

For example, Mr. Ram based in India is a manufacturer of artifacts and sells it to Mr. Johan based in the USA which is payable in 90 days.

Because of this Mr. Ram has to face difficulty in running the business as his cash is blocked for 90 days, and still has to pay rent, salary, and other monthly expenses. For this, he has to take a working capital loan like cash credit or overdraft, which is a tedious job.

But now an SCF will come into the picture and discount these bills based on the credit score, payment history, and other details of Mr. Johan (customer).

This is just an age-old business, but Greensill collected all these invoices from various customers, clubbed it together and turned them into short-term assets, and created a fund. These assets were sometimes insured by credit insurance and were sold to funds run by Credit Suisse.

Credit Suisse then would sell them to its customers stating the returns were slightly higher than the money market returns. All these are just like the 2008 Mortgage CDO (Collateralized Debt Obligation) that was created by the bank and sold by investment bankers.

The risk of default is not in the hands of Greensill, it is transferred to Credit Suisse, but the risk is insured by the insurance companies.

As the company showed itself as a fin-tech, Softbank was ready to invest, which invested \$ 1.5 billion in Greensill Capital in 2019.

The company has always been involved in controversies from former Prime minister David Cameron who became the advisor to Greensill, to the collapse of British construction giant Carillion in 2018 who was funded by Greensill, to the insolvency of Spanish renewable energy company Abengoa, again funded by Greensill.

Grenfell is also said to be involved in the NMC scandal, where Dr. BR Shetty has underreported its liabilities.

It is believed that Greensill has lent money on the basis of the business's potential future sales, but in actual no such past transactions were there. Increasing the risk to a high level.

Bluestone resources sued Greensill for fraud in federal court, arguing that Greensill misled them into deepening their ties without disclosing its financial troubles.

The major issue or the controversy is relating to exposure or loans given to Gupta Family Group Alliance, an international group of businesses associated with businessman Sanjeev Gupta and the British Gupta family.

The GFG Alliance is majorly involved in mining and owning steel mills around the globe. The mining and Steel industry is a capital-intensive industry, and all the capital was financed by Greensill in form of loans and providing supply chain financing. The loans were provided from its bank situated in Germany.

The German regulator -BaFin, when it audited the Greensill bank it observed that there are no accounts receivable or bills were not available for the same. It is estimated that the GFG alliance and its group companies have taken a loan of \$ 5 billion.

Another controversy is Kattera, a construction company based in the USA. In which Softbank has invested \$ 2 billion and Greensill has granted a loan of \$ 435 million. Due to the pandemic, the company could not repay the loan. The loan was restructured where Greensill has to forgo the loan and will get a 5% stake in the nearly bankrupt start-up.

My assumption is, the loan which was granted to Kattera, was a loss that was incurred by the insurance companies took the loss and not Greensill. That can be one of the reasons why they refused to provide insurance.

Credit Suisse had to freeze the fund which was discussed earlier, the fund is estimated to be \$ 10 billion. The fund will sell its treasury bonds to repay the investors.

The scandal is still unraveling and will take some time.

Learning-

Don't put all your eggs in one basket- Never be dependent on one customer or supplier, as over-dependency can lead to downfall. As Greensill's major customer was GFG

By Shashank K E



Update for the day #1303 | The end of Mexico's secretive oil deal?



When you put together a list of the world's biggest oil producers, you'll probably include names like Saudi Arabia, Iran and the US. You are unlikely to include Mexico in this list.

But guess what? Mexico actually makes a list that includes the top 15 oil-producing countries in the world. Sure, it isn't part of the 13-member Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)—a cartel that's largely responsible for dictating the production and supply of oil. But it is however an important member of OPEC+, a younger sibling of OPEC, that includes 10 other oil-producing nations who also have some say in the whole “should we cut oil supply or not” discussion.

Bottom line—Mexico has some clout here. And it's not just any clout. They actually have the ability to influence oil prices on their own using something called the Hacienda Hedge. And that's what we are going to be talking about today.

Mexico produces around 1.7 million barrels of oil a day. And it exports a lot of it. But as you probably already know, the oil market is pretty volatile. The cartels can try their best to temper supply and control prices, but demand can be tumultuous at times. Oil prices could rise tomorrow and tumble a month later.

There's always that risk.

So what does Mexico do? Every year, it signs off on a contract with some large investment banks. The deal is structured to give Mexico the right to sell its oil in the future at a predetermined price. In market parlance, it's a “put” option.

So if the price of oil tumbles below a certain level, then the contract kicks in and the banks have to pay out the difference. In some ways, it's like buying insurance. Mexico expects to sell its oil at a certain price and if they can't do it when the time arrives, the investment banks have to make up the difference. This is how they protect their export revenues when it comes to oil. And for the past two decades, they've been doing it with remarkable consistency.

In 2020 alone, the country is rumoured to have netted close to \$2.5 billion. This was when the pandemic was in full swing. There were lockdowns. The economy was at a standstill and with personal transportation barely chugging along, demand for oil had all but collapsed. The price of the Mexican crude oil basket fell from \$50 a barrel to less than \$10 a barrel.

The country's economy would have gone for a toss if they had to sell their oil at such cheap prices. But with the Hacienda hedge, the government had a contingency plan in place. It was locked in a contract to sell oil at \$49 a barrel through the "put" options and in many ways, this was a lifesaver.

But now, they may finally be moving on and if you're wondering why, well, there are a couple of reasons.

For one, the contracts aren't all that profitable. Sure the country netted close to \$14 Billion between 2001 and 2017, but they only made profits to the tune of \$2.4 Billion. Why? you ask. Well, these contracts don't come cheap. Mexico has to pay a premium to buy the so-called insurance policy and they had to pay close \$11.7 Billion in fee and commissions alone to facilitate the transactions.

And then there's the fact that oil prices can rally too. In which case, the fees count for nothing. Mexico will sell the oil elsewhere at a higher price and the put option will be useless. Also, since the Hacienda hedge is an open secret now, it becomes more expensive to put together these contracts in the first place. If other investors are privy to these transactions, it becomes more expensive for Mexico to have such an arrangement. They'll have to pay an even higher premium. So it's not all that rosy.

And more importantly, Mexico wants to be self-sufficient. They want to reduce their dependence on oil exports. By 2022, they want to halve the total quantum of exports. And by 2023, they want to stop exporting it altogether. But how does all this matter? How can a country influence oil prices when they aren't even going to be participating?

Well, the thing is—A lack of participation can have a distinct effect on the price of oil. Think about all those contracts we described earlier. When Mexico dabbles in this stuff, they are betting on the future price of oil. This bet in effect influences expectations across the board. And if Mexico isn't supplying billions of dollars worth of oil in the "futures" market, then it could quite possibly push the "future" price of oil even further.

That's kind of the gist here!

By Brinda Rameswaran



Update for the day #1304 | Test cricket's 1st catch and 1st wicket were taken by same person

The first wicket and first catch in Test cricket history were taken by England's Allen Hill on the first morning of the first Test in 1877.

Hill bowled Australia's Nat Thomson for one run to claim Test cricket's first wicket. Hill then took Test cricket's first catch off Alfred Shaw's bowling to dismiss Tom Horan, second dismissal of the match.

Allen Hill profile and biography:

A very fine right-arm fast bowler whose career was beset by injuries; Allen Hill bowled with an action close to round-arm - despite debuting well after the change in the laws that permitted over-arm bowling. His action was described by Wisden as "one of the best of its kind that can be recalled", and he bowled quite fast from a short run up.

He came to prominence for Yorkshire in 1871, when he took 12 Surrey wickets for only 53 runs at The Oval. He was probably at his best in 1874, when halfway through the season he met with an accident that caused him to miss the rest of the season - but not before performing the hat-trick for the Players against the Gentlemen. In 1876-77 he toured Australia, playing in the first Test of all.

Opening the bowling for England, Hill took the first-ever Test wicket when he bowled Thomson. He followed this by making 35* in the England first innings, but when promoted to open as England chased 154, he made a duck.

He then made 49 and 17*, and thus finished his Test career with a somewhat flattering Test average of over 50 - his batting was somewhat unpredictable.

In 1879 his knee gave way whilst bowling, and his career ended in 1883 when he suffered a broken collar-bone. A kindly and gentle man, he was popular amongst his fellow players, and in retirement turned to umpiring, officiating in a Test in 1890.

By Kiran Kumar



Update for the day #1305 | The Indian government owns Vi



There was a point when everything seemed lost.

Vi (earlier Vodafone India) had publicly exclaimed that they wanted to hang up their boots and exit the business altogether. Both Kumar Mangalam Birla, (a man who owns a sizeable stake in Vi) and UK-based Vodafone, had contemplated giving away their stake for practically nothing.

The simple point made was this—“It does not make sense to put good money after bad. So, it’s best to get out when you can.”

However, this was easier said than done. Especially when you consider how Vi got here in the first place. But in a nutshell, here’s what happened.

- Jio came in with low tariffs and cheap internet and remodeled the telecom landscape.
- Vi’s subscriber base plummeted—from 408 million users in 2018 to 253 million by September 2021.
- Vi’s debt burden increased substantially.
- The government meanwhile made additional demands once they figured that the likes of Vodafone haven’t exactly been sharing revenues as outlined, despite using public airways
- And the Supreme Court agreed with this assessment
- All in all, Vi had boatloads of debt, it was losing market share and it owed big money to the government.

But then in September 2021, the government offered a lifeline of sorts. They gave Vi some more time to pay back their dues. And they made a provision for Vi to convert a part of their dues (specifically the interest obligations) into equity if they so desired. Meaning Vi could give away part-ownership in the company if they didn’t want to put up the interest—which by some estimates tallied up to ₹16000 Crores.

And if you’re wondering what happened on 11th Jan, well, Vi took up this offer. The management decided that it was in no position to pay back the dues and so, willingly converted the interest obligation into equity. As such, the Government of India is now the largest shareholder in Vi and owns nearly 36% of the telecom behemoth. Meanwhile, existing shareholders have seen their ownership reduce in value overnight. And they’re a bit upset about it, no doubt.

But why would the government even make such an offer? What's the rationale here?

Well, in some ways, it was a classic Hobson's choice. The government had to pick between two sub-optimal alternatives. Promoters of Vi had already threatened to pull out of the business. And if that eventuality did transpire, the industry would have effectively been reduced to a duopoly—a market characterized by only two players, Reliance and Airtel. In effect, it would have been a terrible proposition for consumers all across India. And the government most certainly did not want this happening.

Also, they couldn't forgive the dues either because that would have been a colossal waste of value. So, some analysts believe that this may have been the last resort after all.

But will this also mean that the government will now run the show?

Well, that's unlikely to happen. If anything, the government is out there privatizing everything they can get their hands on. And the last thing they want to be doing is running a telco that's already in a deep financial hole.

In fact, rumor has it that the government doesn't even want to oversee affairs. They'll likely leave it to the promoters and offload their stake as soon as things stabilize.

But how will that happen? Who's going to buy a stake in Vi?

Well, the hope is that this financial reprieve will help the company get back up on its feet. Granted, they still have a lot of debt. They're not investing as much as their peers. And they are losing subscribers by the bulk. But at least this gives the company some hope. Maybe they'll be able to make some progress from here on in.

And considering that the government now allows 100% automatic foreign direct investment (FDI) in the telecom sector maybe a foreign player will come in and eventually pick up this stake, if things improve.

By Anjali Baghel



Update for the day #1306 | Virat Kohli- The Most Successful India Test Captain.



The era of Virat Kohli as India captain is over across all formats after the 33-year-old's announcement that he is stepping down as Test skipper. Kohli's seven-year stint as India's Test captain may have ended with a series defeat in South Africa, but his spell in charge yielded historically successful results. No player in history has more Test caps as India captain than Kohli's 68, while his 40 wins as captain is the most of any Indian Test player. Those 40 wins also make Kohli the fourth most successful captain in Test history, behind only Graeme Smith, Ricky Ponting and Steve Waugh.

Kohli's captaincy era began when he deputised for MS Dhoni in the opening Test of the series away in Australia in 2014, a match that India lost by 48 runs despite centuries in both innings from their young stand-in skipper. And Kohli took over the reins permanently from Dhoni for the fourth and final Test of the series, where his first-innings 147 saw him become the first batter in men's Test history to score three centuries in their first three innings as Test captain. Kohli's 692 runs in that four-Test series loss are still the most ever by an Indian batter in a series in Australia.

Since the end of that series in Australia in 2014/15, Kohli turned India into the dominant force in world Test cricket, losing just five of 24 Test series, including the one-off ICC World Test Championship Final in 2021, and the most recent series in South Africa.

During that period Kohli led India to the top of the ICC Test Rankings, a spot which the team held for 42 consecutive months from October 2016 through to March 2020.

At home India won all 11 Test series under Kohli's stewardship, while away from home he oversaw India's first ever series win in Australia in 2018/19. Kohli also took India to the brink of a series win in England in 2021, with his side leading 2-1 with one postponed Test still to play, and captained India to the final of the inaugural ICC World Test Championship.

Kohli also excelled as a batter while captain, scoring 20 of his 27 Test centuries while leading the team, the most of any India captain in history.

As Test leader, he scored 5864 runs in 68 matches at an average of 54.80. And at home those figures are even more eye-catching, with Kohli racking up 2907 runs in 31 Tests in India at an average of 67.60, including 10 Test centuries. Kohli was also a significant contributor with the bat while Test captain outside India as well, scoring centuries and averaging comfortably over 40 in Australia, England, South Africa, Sri Lanka and the West Indies

By Roshan Bhandari



Update for the day #1307 | 11 Mysteries in India

India has been called the land of mysteries since time immemorial, whether for its various enigmatic natural phenomena or eccentricities associated with its religions and culture. And while science has worked hard to debunk and find a logical reason behind every riddle, there still remain some that give rationalists a run for their money. Here are some of modern India's most puzzling aspects that are bound to make your eyes pop!

•Kodinhi – Kerala's village of twins



By any metric, conceiving twins and triplets is a rare natural occurrence around the world. In fact, on average only 16 out of 1,000 successful pregnancies in the world result in twins and this average is even lower in India at just 9. However, this ratio is heavily skewed in the sleepy hamlet of Kodinhi in Kerala, which has a record 400 pairs of twins in a population of just over 2,000 families! Geneticists and scientists have long tried to explain this rare phenomenon but are only now making some headway.

While experts have pointed to genetics as an obvious factor, what's even more mysterious is that irrespective of religion, lineage or their original heritage, all families living in the village have conceived more than the average pairs of twins over the last few generations, and the number is consistently growing.

•Tanjore's Brihadeeswara Temple



The 'Big Temple' in Thanjavur is renowned across the world as an architectural marvel and is one India's 36 World Heritage Sites. While there are many imposing and majestic temples in Tamil Nadu, what makes this temple particularly interesting is its architectural mysteries that still confound many. The granite structure is popular for having one of the tallest gopurams in India and at the apex lies an 81-tonne monolithic Shikhara mounted at a height of 66 meters. While architecture and science have advanced over centuries to create much greater marvels, taken in

the context of its era of construction, dating back more than 1,000 years, this aspect of the temple still baffles experts. Questions about how the heavy and huge Shikhara was mounted at such a height and how such massive amounts of granite were carried to the site with no recorded quarries in the vicinity are still unanswered. By some accounts, the tower is constructed in such a way that it does not cast a shadow at noon on any day of the year as well!

•**Prahlad Jani – India’s fasting fakir!**



India is a land of eccentric saints and sadhus, but none of these gurus have raised worldwide interest and flummoxed experts as much as Prahlad Jani, the sadhu who claims to have fasted without food or water for over 40 years. His claims had long been taken with a pinch of salt by scientists and experts and outright dismissed by rationalists. However, in 2010, Jani was part of an extensive study by a team of 35 Indian experts from the Defence Institute of Physiology and Allied Science, which lasted over 15 days.

While the study was shrouded in mystery with the government deciding not to divulge any details, it was widely publicized that the guru, also known as Mataji, was in good health despite not eating or drinking water and being in isolation for more than ten days. What’s more, it was further claimed that he did not urinate or excrete during the duration of the tests. While the veracity of this account is still an open question, it certainly has raised interest among the world’s leading experts.

•**Kirti Stambha – the Iron Pillar of Delhi**



While the concept of rust-resistant iron only became prominent during the industrial revolution in western civilization, there stands an iron pillar in Delhi that predates such known material technology by nearly a millennium!

The Kirti Stambha or victory pillar of Delhi is a six-tonne structure that is constructed out of iron sometime in the 5th century and has stood the test of time without succumbing to rust. The science of this pillar has baffled scientists, primarily for the fact that such advanced technology for rust resistance were thought to be unknown elsewhere in the world at the time.

•Shani Shingnapur – the village without locks and doors



If you were to visit the village of Shani Shingnapur in the Indian state of Maharashtra, your first impression would be that it is pretty confusing. Even today, no house in the village has any locks or even doors for that matter and people leave their wealth and jewelry unsecured in the open.

But the more baffling aspect of this mystery is that there hasn't been a single incident of reported theft in over 300 years. The reason, according to legends, is that the village is protected by the Hindu deity Shani (representative of the planet Saturn) and that any thieves who beset this village will be immediately punished by losing their sight. The tradition runs so deep that the village now even has banks and police stations that are 'lockless'!

•Hanging Pillar of Lepakshi

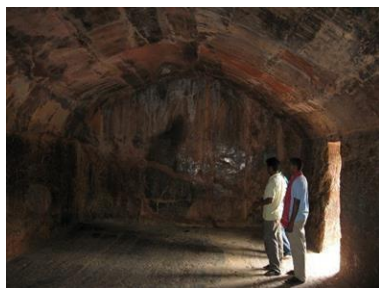


Temples in India are repositories of many of the country's existing mysteries, both religious and architectural. But none have garnered the kind of interest for eccentricities as the Lepakshi Temple of Andhra Pradesh.

While the nearly 500-year-old temple is an architectural wonder and also a site of national importance, the one particular attraction that has caught the most attention is the famous Hanging Pillar of Lepakshi. In the center of the temple structure that consists of more than 60 pillars, there exists one beautifully carved stone pillar that does not touch the ground!

Hanging just a few centimeters above ground, the science behind it is yet to be sufficiently examined, but whether by design or by a freak of nature, the hanging pillar definitely constitutes an unsolved mystery unlike any other in India.

•Son Bhandar – Bhimbisara’s hidden treasure



Son Bhandar Caves, a pair of rock-cut structures located at the foot of the Vaibhar Hills are an exquisite site indicative of India’s ancient culture and are well worth a visit. This has been home to several Hindu and Jain monks, who are said to have meditated here.

However, the most interesting aspect of this cave is its legend of hidden treasure. According to lore, the western cave was the resting place for the wealth of Mauryan King Bimbisara who ruled in the 6th century BC with Rajgir as his capital. Legend has it that Bimbisara hid his vast treasure here to protect it from his son who usurped his throne – and the gold has stayed put here for more than 2,000 years. Taken by the legend, the British allegedly tried to cannonball their way in but only managed to leave a damaged relief on the cave interior that is still visible.

•Sentinelese of Andaman and Nicobar



North Sentinel Island in the Indian archipelago of Andaman and Nicobar is home to what is widely believed to be the ‘most isolated tribe in the world’.

While there are several uncontacted peoples in several parts of the world, what makes the Sentinelese special is that unlike most other tribes, they remain uncontacted not because of geographical isolation, but rather primarily because they actively reject it and even use violence against those that try to establish contact. According to recent research, the language and culture of the Sentinelese do not bear resemblance to any others in the vicinity, leading to the premise that they have possibly remained without contact with the outside world for thousands of years.

•Shetpal – the land of snakes

India has a long tradition of worshipping different animals as embodiments of deities associated with them and one of the most popular among them is the magnificent king cobra. However, nowhere else in India are cobras more revered than in the Maharashtrian village of Shetpal, where they roam free and wild in astonishingly large numbers.

But what is most startling about this quaint hamlet is that despite the large number of poisonous snakes that roam unfettered even near children and the elderly, there have been almost no recorded cases of snakebite-deaths among the locals. Whether it has to do with their own immunity or a symbiotic bond that has been developed with the snakes, the village of Shetpal definitely defies the reputation of cobras as harbingers of death.

•Roopkund – India’s skeleton lake

Seen from afar, Roopkund Lake in the Uttarakhand state of India is just as picturesque as any of the other icy attractions in the Himalayas. However, a closer look reveals a spine-chilling detail – over 200 skeletons resting at the bottom of it that are mostly still visible.

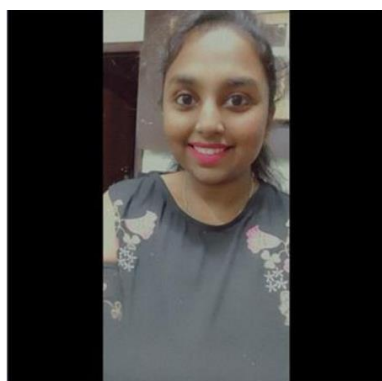
This mass grave has long-confounded researchers and has given rise to several stories and legends about this place that mostly relate to the anger of the gods. However, after being shrouded in mystery for a long time, in recent years researchers have found that the skeletons belong to pilgrims who were hit by a violent hailstorm sometime during the 9th century AD (approx 850 AD) that spewed hailstones the size of cricketballs.

•Mass bird suicides of Jatinga

This remote village located in the state of Assam is home to one of the most baffling phenomena in nature. Every year, during the end of the monsoon months, birds of several species such as the tiger bittern, little egret, and pond heron, apparently ‘commit suicide’ by hitting against bamboo poles in the area.

While birds are usually great navigators, this phenomenon came to global attention in the 1960s after several expeditions. There have been multiple explanations for why this happens such as disorientation and fog build up. However, experts are yet to arrive at a more concrete explanation

By Nikitha M A



Update for the day #1308 | What Happened to BlackBerry?

What happened to BlackBerry? The company, once the most valuable in Canada, has effectively been a zombie stock for a while.



A Brief History of BlackBerry

BlackBerry was once iconic: all bankers and similar professionals clutched one of those smartphones with a keyboard and the little wheel on the side or trackball in the middle.

Their key functionality was the ability to send emails on the go, as well as its BBM (BlackBerry Messenger) platform—essentially a mobile version of AOL's AIM. The technology, however, quickly became obsolete with the rise of Apple's iOS and Google's Android, with the company going from a market share of over 33% in the UK in 2011 to an insignificant one currently (0.04%).

Why BlackBerry failed?

- Lack Of Innovation to Expand the Customer Base

A prime reason for following this ideology was a fixed market share. BlackBerry had a monopoly over the IT sector of various corporate houses. Hence, it did not realize the need to cater to the masses with upgrades. Some of the biggest fails in this segment include the following.

- No Effective and Timely Upgrades

Upgrading the software means to introduce some new features into existing mobile phones. However, BlackBerry never considered it as an option to grow. Where competitors were busy providing effective and timely upgrades to their users, BlackBerry just upgraded its security patch to make the device more secure.

- Used A Very Restricted OS

BlackBerry's OS had captured almost 14.6 million users in 2011 which significantly dropped to 0.31% of the market share in 2015. A major grievance by the users included BB's insistence on its OS.

- Latecomer to Touchscreen

BlackBerry came with the touchscreen phone in 2008, one year after it was already launched by Apple. The phone was named Storm but didn't manage to live up to its own name and was a major buzz eater for the touchscreen lovers.

BlackBerry pulls life support for once-indispensable business smartphone

BlackBerry Ltd is pulling the plug on service for its once-ubiquitous business smartphones, which were touted by executives, politicians and legions of fans in the early 2000s.

The move marks the end of an era as the phones, which sported a tiny QWERTY physical keyboard, pioneered push email and the BBM instant messaging service.

Former US President Barack Obama, one of its most celebrated users, made headlines in 2016 when he was asked to give up his BlackBerry and replace it with an un ..

Blackberry lost favour with users with the advent of Apple's touchscreen iPhones and rival Android devices. In recent years, the company pivoted to making cybersecurity software and embedded operating systems for cars.

Social media was alighted with tributes. One Twitter user reminisced it was a "fabulous machine" and hoped the company's phones would be resurrected.

In a document published in 2020, the company said it would take steps to decommission legacy services for BlackBerry 10 and BlackBerry OS operating systems and added devices running on them would no longer be supported and may not be able to receive or send data, make phone calls or send messages reliably.

By Sadhana V Raghavan



Update for the day #1309 | How the IPO saved Zomato from going Bankrupt

Zomato is among the leading online food services platforms. It is listed as an online market aggregator that connects customers to a partnered chain of local restaurants. Its B2C model has achieved success in both food delivery and dining-out segments. On July 23, Zomato NSE-5.95 % Ltd. listed on the Indian stock exchanges at more than 50% premium to its issue price of Rs 76. That was exactly a week after the food-delivery and restaurant discovery platform's initial public offering went live, setting the stage for a crush of startups which are looking to go public over the next few months.



A lot of experienced investors compare the Zomato IPO with that of Infosys IPO of 1993. There was unprecedented excitement about the debut of Zomato in the market. The Zomato IPO was a watershed moment in the Indian startup ecosystem.

The IPO of the food delivery giant opened the floodgates for more IPO's of new age internet companies. With Nykaa and Policy Bazaar ready to list and Paytm IPO opening next week, India is ready to welcome a new set of companies in its stock markets.

During an interview with the Economics Times, the Zomato CEO Deepinder Goyal revealed an undiscovered part of the successful Zomato IPO. Goyal said the business of Zomato was down by almost 90% during the first lockdown the previous year.

With business almost close to Zero, Zomato had just enough funds to carry out business for the next 6 months. During the same time, the government of India also the changed the FDI rules that made the investment in Indian companies. The biggest investor in Zomato, Ant financials, could not pump more funds into the company.

With limited money in the bank accounts and no funding in sight, the future was looking bleak for Zomato. Deepinder Goyal said the team for Zomato explored the idea of a possible IPO to save the company from going under the bus.

Indian markets also witnessed the incoming of massive liquidity in the following months. This made the plan for an IPO even more solid for Zomato. Zomato moved ahead with the IPO and raised more than Rs.9000 crores from the stock markets. Whatever was the reason behind the IPOs, Zomato marked a new era in India's growing startup ecosystem.

With more startups going public, we may see the domination of the internet and tech companies in the Indian stock markets.

By Muskan Jamadar



Update for the day #1310 | The January Effect



The stock market is not a place for speculations. The movement of stock prices is determined by gaps in the supply and demand in the market. When there is a high demand and low supply, stock prices go up. The opposite happens when the demand is low and the supply is high.

The January month holds a peculiar place in the stock market. According to the January effect hypothesis, the stock market tends to go up in the first month of the calendar year. Though this is a hypothesis, the historical returns prove the January effect to some extent.

While this market anomaly has been identified in the past, the January effect seems to have largely disappeared as its presence became known. Investment banker Sidney Wachtel first noticed this effect in 1942. This historical trend, however, has been less pronounced in recent years because the markets seem to have adjusted for it.

This historical trend, however, has been less pronounced in recent years because the markets seem to have adjusted for it. Between January 2011 and January 2022, the Indian benchmark index Nifty gained 6 out of 11 times. The index has generated an average return of 1.88% in this time frame. Nifty rose the most in January 2012 when the index recorded a 12.43% gain in the month.

The first possible reason for a stellar January market is free capital. Many employees and professionals worldwide receive yearly bonuses in December, which they use to invest in January. It increases the demand for stocks, which makes the indices rise worldwide.

Another possible explanation is that investors tend to sell their loss-making stocks in December to reduce their realized profits. By lowering the realized profits, investors can reduce their capital gain taxes. The money they generated from selling stocks in December is reinvested in January.

Beyond tax-loss harvesting and repurchases, as well as investors putting cash bonuses into the market, another explanation for the January Effect has to do with investor psychology. Some investors believe that January is the best month to begin an investment program or perhaps are following through on a New Year's resolution to begin investing for the future.

Year-end sell-offs also attract buyers interested in the lower prices, knowing the dips are not based on company fundamentals. On a large scale, this can drive prices higher in January.

There is criticism for the January Effect hypothesis. Long-term investors and market experts believe that there is nothing like the January Effect. The stock market gains in January is like any other month due to a simple gap in supply and demand of shares.

The January effect was most witnessed during the last few decades of the 20th century. The 21st century saw an inconsistent January effect. A lack of compelling reasons makes the January effect still a hypothesis

By Akshit K Jain



Update for the day #1311 | Story of an Indian Princess who became the most admired Queen of Korea

Can you believe that incredibly, six million Koreans or almost 10% of the Korean population trace their ancestry to an Indian Princess who is said to have travelled to Korea in search of her groom? Yes, it is true.

The reference is got from the Korean work Samguk Yusa written by a Buddhist monk in the 13th century where he mentions about a 16 year old Indian princess Sembavalam also called as Heo Hwang-Ok who got married to Kim Suro and became the first queen of Geumgwan Gaya.

The princess travelled to Korea along with her slaves and courtiers from Tamil Nadu. The convoy of Princess Sembavalam stayed there in Korea which might be a major factor that contributed to the spread of Tamil culture over there. It is said that Heo, Lee and Kim clans trace their lineage to Queen Heo Hwang Ok as her descendants.

Heo was the princess of Ayuta Kingdom which was located in the southern part of India. Some people wrongly connect Ayuta Kingdom with Ayodhya. But the ancient name of Ayodhya was 'Saketa' during that time and Samguk Yusa was written long back in the 13th century.

Therefore it does not refer to Ayodhya. Ayuta Kingdom here refers to "Ay Kingdom" that belonged to the Pandyan dynasty of ancient Tamilakam. This can be substantiated with the fact that princess Heo carried with her the symbol of Twin fish in trident. Pandyan Kingdom depicts two fishes on their flags, coins, and emblem.

The fish symbol is considered to be one of the most meaningful symbols in the lives of the people living in Pandyan Kingdom. Princess Heo was also known by the name Sembavalam in Tamil which means red coral. Interestingly, the Korean name Heo Hwang-Ok also shares the same meaning.

Tradition

Nadukkal Tradition which is followed by Tamils can be seen in Queen Heo Hwang- Ok's tomb. Heo Hwang-Ok is worshipped as a deity in Korea. It is indeed proud to know that a princess from India is worshipped as a deity in Korea and at the same time it is sad that most of the Indians are unaware of this information.

A unique similarity between Tamil Nadu and Korea is pearl hunting. The activities like pearl hunting in the industry for coral ornaments were familiar only in ancient Tamil Nadu about 2000 years ago when princess Heo got married to Kim Suro.

Surprisingly, even today women in Tamil Nadu and South Korea are involved in deep sea diving for the purpose of pearl hunting. Koreans are largely rice eaters and their paddy cultivation was said to have taught them by the Tamils. Just like Tamils, Koreans have the habit of leaving slippers outside their house and bowing before elders as a sign of respect.

Language

The Linguistic relationship between Korean and Tamil language cannot be ruled out in establishing the actual history of Korean people. There are many words found in both Korean and Tamil language which share the same meaning and are pronounced in a similar way. Researchers have found 500 words that are similar in Korean and Tamil.

Most of us know the fact that India and Korea have been long bound trade partners since the Iron Age. It is unknown to most of us that both countries have deeper connections. Little did we know that the Indian princess Sembavalam is the most admired Queen of Korea till date.

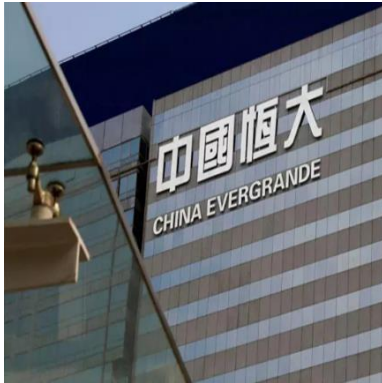
The story of Princess Sembavalam will definitely make us feel that Koreans are our Kin. Ours is a relationship that is beyond trade and commerce. People of ancient times were far more knowledgeable, skillful and importantly more humane in nature compared to people living in the present generation.

The kind of diplomatic relationship that was maintained by our ancestors is something that the current governments and citizens should adapt to. Bilateral ties between Korea and India based on their language and cultural exchange will definitely benefit trade, economic and cultural relationships of both the countries, if we could reflect on the kind of bond that has been established by both the countries 2000 years ago.

By Divya N Y



Update for the day #1312 | Evergrande: China Property Giant



Businessman Hui Ka Yan founded Evergrande, formerly known as the Hengda Group, in 1996 in Guangzhou, southern China.

Evergrande Real Estate currently owns more than 1,300 projects in more than 280 cities across China. The broader Evergrande Group now encompasses far more than just real estate development.

Its businesses range from wealth management, making electric cars and food and drink manufacturing. It even owns one of country's biggest football teams - Guangzhou FC. Mr Hui was once Asia's richest person and, despite seeing his wealth plummet in recent months, has a personal fortune of more than \$10bn (£7.3bn), according to Forbes.

Why is Evergrande in trouble?

Evergrande expanded aggressively to become one of China's biggest companies by borrowing more than \$300bn. Last year, Beijing brought in new rules to control the amount owed by big real estate developers.

The new measures led Evergrande to offer its properties at major discounts to ensure money was coming in to keep the business afloat. Now, it is struggling to meet the interest payments on its debts. This uncertainty has seen Evergrande's share price tumble by almost 90% over the last year.

Why would it matter if Evergrande collapses?

There are several reasons why Evergrande's problems are serious.

Firstly, many people bought property from Evergrande even before building work began. They have paid deposits and could potentially lose that money if it goes bust.

There are also the companies that do business with Evergrande. Firms including construction and design firms and materials suppliers are at risk of incurring major losses, which could force them into bankruptcy.

The third is the potential impact on China's financial system: If Evergrande defaults, banks and other lenders may be forced to lend less. This could lead to what is known as a credit crunch, when companies struggle to borrow money at affordable rates.

A credit crunch would be very bad news for the world's second largest economy, because companies that can't borrow find it difficult to grow, and in some cases are unable to continue operating. This may also unnerve foreign investors, who could see China as a less attractive place to put their money.

Is Evergrande 'too big to fail'?

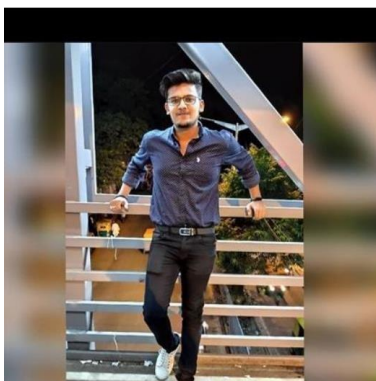
The very serious potential fallout of such a heavily-indebted company collapsing has led some analysts to suggest that Beijing may step in.

The Economist Intelligence Unit's Mattie Bekink thinks so: "Rather than risk disrupting supply chains and enraging homeowners, we think the government will probably find a way to ensure Evergrande's core business survives." Others though are not sure.

In a post on China's chat app and social media platform WeChat, the influential editor-in-chief of state-backed Global Times newspaper Hu Xijin said Evergrande should not rely on a government bailout and instead needs to save itself.

This also chimes with Beijing's aim to rein in corporate debt, which means that such a high profile bailout could be seen as setting a bad example.

By Dhruv Bajoria



Update for the day #1313 | National War Memorial and Amar Jawan Jyoti

What is the National War Memorial and when was it made?

The National War Memorial, which is around 400 meters from India Gate was inaugurated by PM Narendra Modi in February 2019, in an area of around 40 acres. It was built to commemorate all the soldiers who have laid down their lives in the various battles, wars, operations and conflicts of Independent India. There are many independent memorials for such soldiers, but no memorial existed commemorating them all at the national level.

Discussions to build such a memorial had been ongoing since 1961, but it did not come up. In 2015, the Modi-led government approved its construction, and the location east of the India Gate at C Hexagon was finalised. The final design of the memorial was selected through a competition.

The architecture of the memorial is based on four concentric circles. Largest is the Raksha Chakra or the Circle of Protection which is marked by a row of trees, each of which represent soldiers, who protect the country. The Tyag Chakra, the Circle of Sacrifice, has circular concentric walls of honour based on the Chakravayuh.

The walls have independent granite tablets for each of the soldiers who have died for the country since Independence. As of today, there are 26,466 names of such soldiers on these granite tablets etched in golden letters.

This Veerta Chakra, the Circle of Bravery, has a covered gallery with six bronze crafted murals depicting the battles and actions of our Armed Forces.

The final is the Amar Chakra, the Circle of Immortality, which has an obelisk, and the Eternal Flame. The flame from the Amar Jawan Jyoti at the India Gate will be merged with this flame, which has been kept burning since 2019 when the memorial was unveiled. The flame is a symbol of the immortality of the spirit of the fallen soldiers, and a mark that the country will not forget their sacrifice.

Busts of the 21 soldiers who have been conferred with the highest gallantry award of the country, Param Vir Chakra, are also installed at the memorial.

Why was the eternal flame at Amar Jawan Jyoti extinguished from there?

The eternal flame at the Amar Jawan Jyoti underneath India Gate in central Delhi was an iconic symbol of the nation's tributes to the soldiers who have died for the country in various wars and conflicts since Independence.

Established in 1972, it was to mark India's victory over Pakistan in the 1971 War, which resulted in the creation of Bangladesh. The then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had inaugurated it on Republic Day 1972, after India defeated Pakistan in December 1971

For 50 years the eternal flame had been burning underneath India Gate, without being extinguished. But on Friday, the flame was finally put off, as it was merged with another eternal flame at the National War Memorial.

There are several reasons that have been mentioned by officials. Since the political controversy broke out government sources have claimed, giving a “correct perspective” that the flame will not be extinguished, but just moved to be merged with the one at the National War Memorial.

Sources said that the eternal flame paid homage to the soldiers killed in the 1971 War, but does not mention their name, and the India Gate is a “symbol of our colonial past”.

“The names of all Indian martyrs from all the wars, including 1971 and wars before and after it are housed at the National War Memorial. Hence it is a true tribute to have the flame paying tribute to martyrs there.”

Defence establishment officials said that once the National War Memorial came up in 2019, Indian political and military leaders and foreign dignitaries pay their tributes to the fallen soldiers at the National War Memorial, which used to happen at the Amar Jawan Jyoti earlier.

With this change it was felt that two flames were not needed, even though when the National War Memorial was built officials had categorically stated that both the flames will be kept alive.

But another reason is that the Amar Jawan Jyoti was etched so strongly in the emotional psyche of the country that the new war memorial did not get the attention as the government had expected, and the government wants to promote the new memorial it built in 2019. Further, it can also be seen as part of the government’s redevelopment of the entire Central Vista, of which India Gate, the Amar Jawan Jyoti and the National War Memorial are parts of.

Along with moving the flame, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced that the canopy next to the India Gate will get a statue of the Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. The new statue will be 28 feet high. Till the statue is completed, Modi said that a hologram statue of Bose will be placed under the canopy, which was unveiled on January 23. The canopy used to have a statue of King George V, which was removed in 1968.

By Prathiksha



Update for the day #1314 | About Apple Company

Apple Inc. is an American multinational technology company that specializes in consumer electronics, software and online services. Apple is the largest information technology company by revenue (total US\$365.8 billion in 2021) and, as of January 2021, it is the world's most valuable company, the fourth-largest personal computer vendor by unit sales and second-largest mobile phone manufacturer. It is one of the Big Five American information technology companies, alongside Amazon, Alphabet Inc. (Google), Meta Platforms (Facebook), and Microsoft.

Founders

Apple was founded in 1976 by Steve Jobs, Steve Wozniak and Ronald Wayne to develop and sell Wozniak's Apple I personal computer. It was incorporated by Jobs and Wozniak as Apple Computer, Inc. in 1977, and sales of its computers, among them the Apple II, grew quickly. It went public in 1980, to instant financial success.

Decline in Market Share

As the market for personal computers expanded and evolved throughout the 1990s, Apple lost considerable market share to the lower-priced duopoly of the Microsoft Windows operating system on Intel-powered PC clones (also known as "Wintel"). In 1997, the company bought Next to resolve Apple's unsuccessful operating system strategy and entice Jobs back to the company.

Return to the Market

Jobs guided Apple back to profitability through a number of tactics including introducing the iMac, iPod, iPhone and iPad to critical acclaim, launching memorable advertising campaigns, opening the Apple Store retail chain, and acquiring numerous companies to broaden the company's product portfolio. Jobs resigned in 2011 for health reasons, and died two months later. He was succeeded as CEO by Tim Cook.

Now the company enjoys a high level of brand loyalty, and is ranked as the world's most valuable brand. Apple became the first publicly traded U.S. company to be valued at over \$1 trillion in August 2018, then \$2 trillion in August 2020, and most recently \$3 trillion in January 2022.

By Hardik S Patel



Update for the day #1315 | Places in India that glow in the dark

India has many reasons to attract tourists. From breath taking natural phenomena to age-old structures, it is full of surprises. But, did you know that there are places in India that glow in the dark? Well, if you need to know about these places, here's the list that should be in your bucket list.

□ **Purushwadi Forest, Maharashtra**

This tribal village of Maharashtra not only attracts a number of visitors during summers, but also attracts millions of fireflies. The fireflies produce bioluminescence at twilight, during their breeding season, to attract mates. If you visit this place during the months of May and June, you will witness trees dotted with these fireflies, dazzling with blinking patterns as they try to seduce their mates. Every year, a firefly festival is also celebrated in this region, when trekkers visit this spot to watch the fireflies in all their glory.



□ **Juhu Beach, Maharashtra**

Juhu Beach in Maharashtra is one of the spots that you need to visit at least once. When you plan to visit, try to visit it at night to witness the shimmering shade of electric blue due to a microorganism, which emits light when disturbed called *Noctiluca scintillans*. The best time to visit this spot is after 8 PM to witness the sparkling blue waves, whereas the best vantage point is the cement jetty.



□ **Betalbatim Beach, Goa**

Goa also has a beach that glows in the dark. The Betalbatim Beach, situated in South Goa, is known for pristine white sands, and is an ideal for dolphin spotting and watching breath taking sunsets. This beach also glows in the dark due to bio luminescence in its waters. So, the next time you are in Goa, don't give this beach a miss!



□ **West Jaintia Hills, Meghalaya**

When researchers from China and India went to West Jaintia Hills District in Meghalaya, after hearing about 'electric mushrooms', they were not expecting what was in store for them. After reaching there, they were asked to switch off their torches by the local guide, and that is when they witnessed the magic. The researchers couldn't believe their eyes; they saw tiny mushrooms emitting light on their own. Here, the locals use these mushrooms to navigate the forests. Tests revealed that these electric mushrooms are a new species from the genus *Roridomyces*.

□ **Mattu Beach, Karnataka**

This beach is relaxed and is popular for picnics, walks, and sunset views. Interesting thing about this beach is that the water body glows at night. As per marine biologist Abhishek Jamalabad, the water body glows due to a microorganism called *Noctiluca scintillans*. Commonly, it's known as the sea sparkle, which is a free-living, marine-dwelling species that emits light when disturbed.



□ **Banagram Island In Lakshwadeep**

Located in the Arabian Sea, Bangaram is a tiny teardrop-shaped island and is a part of the Lakshadweep cluster of islands. Being the only uninhabited island resort in Lakshadweep, Banagram has got its own charm. The most fascinating feature of this island which attracts tourists all over the world is the bluish-white glow that the sea waves start emitting during nightfall. The waves sweeping up the shore glow with an iridescent bluish light as a result of the phytoplankton, algae and other aquatic creatures such as jellyfish in the waters.

□ **Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary In Goa**

The Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary is a protected area in the Indian state of Goa in the Western Ghats of South India. It is located in the North Goa District, Sattari taluka near the town of Valpoi and is also home to Bengal Tigers. The area of the sanctuary is thickly forested with moist deciduous vegetation and some evergreen species too. The sanctuary is particularly well-known for its sacred groves that protect rare and indigenous trees like peculiar saffron coloured flowers.

However, the fascinating part about the sanctuary is that it is filled with something known as the mycena genus fungi or bioluminescent mushrooms. The mushroom can be spotted by the faint greenish-yellow or violet light they emit from their mycelium and fruiting bodies. While walking in the night, it looks like a warm glow.

□ **Bioluminescence Beach in Andaman**

Havelock Island in the Andamans is less crowded than Port Blair and therefore has less light pollution from the shore. You'll be able to see the best bioluminescence here when the moon is at its lowest phase.

By Arathi B



Update for the day #1316 | Useful chrome extensions to increase your productivity

□ **Momentum**

Launch this background with every new tab in your Chrome browser. This web page will give you a moment of calm with inspiration to be more productive. Get inspired with a daily image and quote, set a daily focus, and track your to-do list.

Eliminate distractions and beat procrastination with a reminder of your focus for the day on all your web pages.

□ **ClickUp Chrome Extension**

The ClickUp Chrome Extension is one of the top Chrome extensions that brings your favorite project management features to your browser window. Whether you take your work inside or outside the ClickUp platform, you'll save time and speed up your workflow.

With just one feature from the ClickUp Google Chrome extension, you are on your way towards peak productivity:

- Take notes with rich text editing inside the Notepad in ClickUp
- Bookmark a site and save as a task
- Screenshot your entire browser tab or select a certain area to add to a task or download to your computer
- Locate your task in the extension and select it to begin tracking time
- Attach Gmail or Outlook emails to tasks and create tasks from emails

□ **Grammarly for Chrome**

Oh, how I love you, Grammarly, let me count the ways!

You correct everything that I do wrong (and even some things I do right). Grammarly takes spell check to another level because it's able to check your spelling no matter what program you're in, including Google Docs and WordPress, where Grammarly most often reveals itself to me.

Through the extension, Grammarly can also correct your social media posts, emails, and any other content within your Chrome browser. In addition, it's a spell check for web uploads, keeping us all sane.

Also, you get the benefit of a spell checker and grammar checker on Grammarly's website and have your Google Drive uploads checked for all types of typos.

□ **StayFocusd**

StayFocusd is a useful Chrome extension that monitors how much time you've spent on specific sites and gives you the option to block the popular ones—like Reddit, Facebook, Twitter, or other pesky social media sites—to keep you locked in on the task at hand.

But if you want to change your settings, you have to answer and complete a challenge making it more difficult for you to return to your old ways!

□ **Marinara: Pomodoro Assistant**

This is the perfect Chrome extension in the Chrome web store to keep on task while also finding time for breaks.

The Pomodoro technique is a time management technique that focuses your work in specific time intervals and then gives you time for a rest.

A Pomodoro is usually 25 minutes, and then you get a three to five-minute break. Then, after a few more Pomodoros, you get more extended break sizes of usually 15 to 30 minutes.

Using this Pomodoro browser extension allows you to keep track of your Pomodoros right on your Chrome browser without using an additional time-tracking tool.

Get notified on your browser or within the desktop.

By Sai Manjush Y



Update for the day #1317 | The success story of boat

The story of a homegrown consumer electronics start-up which is creating a revolution in the area of audio devices. Yes, I am talking about boAt, a brand which is bringing affordable, fashionable and durable audio products and accessories for this millennial generation. With its trendy and pocket-friendly concept and in multiple colors, the company has been able to win the hearts of lots and lots of people.



Boat is a Delhi-based start-up that was begun in 2016 by Aman Gupta and Sameer Mehta. This began with the sole point of bringing reasonable, sturdy, and all the more significantly, 'popular' items. This incorporates sound items and assistants to recent college grads. The excursion of a little Indian start-up transforming into a gigantic organization is incredibly intriguing.

They had a ton of battles come up through their excursion. However, they didn't decide to surrender throughout everyday life. Likewise, they began from a little start. Having begun as a link maker and dealer organization, today, it has extended its inventory.

One of its originators Aman Gupta knew about the gadgets exchange. He labored for a very long time (2007-10) in his privately-owned company. Prior to joining the business, he had finished his Chartered Accountancy and worked in Citibank somewhere in the range of 2003 and 2006.

In 2010, he selected for an MBA at the Indian School of Business (ISB). This prompted his position at KPMG, the examining firm. He worked there for a concise time of a half year however those were sufficient to influence him. Accordingly, he was captivated by hardware and contraptions and applied at JBL. The organization marked him for a very long time.

Gupta dealt with the beginning up's disconnected circulation. This through stores like Croma and Reliance Digital. His work was to distinguish the right items for the Indian market. His learnings while working for JBL proved to be useful during item advancements at Boat. They went on to begin their little image.

The tagline of the boAt company is 'Plug into Nirvana'. The literal meaning of the word 'Nirvana' is a place of perfect peace and happiness, like heaven. It is quite understood that the company wants to convey that by using any of the devices, one would have a feeling of peace and happiness.

The growth of the boat company is mainly driven by its distribution partnerships. Initially, the company was selling its products and devices on Amazon, Flipkart, Myntra, and Jabong. However, recently the company started its retailing at several Croma outlets and on the official website. The good performance of the products has helped boAt in achieving the desired growth.

Besides, the celebrities and the cricketers of India have helped the company. The company is steadily growing and extending its services to millions of 'boAtheads'. boAtheads is a term the company uses for all its consumers and brand ambassadors.

The company aims to satisfy the needs of users and developing products by closely observing their requirements. The company believes that boAt is a lifestyle brand and not a consumer electronics brand. This strategy was displayed at the Lakmé Fashion Week in Mumbai in the year 2019. During the event, the models were wearing boAt products as the only accessories when they walked down the ramp for one of the designers.

Presently the brand sells a wide assortment of in vogue electronic merchandise going from movement chargers and premium links. This for earphones, headphones, speakers. The organization is consistently developing and stretching out its administrations to a huge number of boAtheads. It has been just a long time since the excursion. Notwithstanding this the organization stands tall with in excess of 800,000 glad clients. Achieving achievement is certainly not an overnight cycle.

Hence the consistent commitment and diligence lead the way to be a victory. Boat organization has adjusted its methodology since the start. It has till date continued to do so. They have cleared their direction to their prosperity venture. The organization intends to fulfil the requirements of clients. They work on creating items by intently noticing their necessities. They have given a ton of significance on their consumer loyalty. This has significantly helped in their prosperity.

By Nishika Nayan Shah



Update for the day #1318 | National Freedom Day

National Freedom Day, always observed on February 1st, celebrates freedom from slavery. It also recognizes that America is a symbol of liberty. The day honors the signing by Abraham Lincoln of a joint House and Senate resolution that later became the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. President Lincoln signed the Amendment outlawing slavery on February 1, 1865. It was not ratified by the states, however, until later on December 18, 1865.

“Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.”

How to Observe #NationalFreedomDay

Reflect on the freedoms found in the United States.

Attend a National Freedom Day ceremony.

Read about or watch a documentary about the 13th Amendment.

Visit an art gallery or museum displaying pieces inspired by the 13th Amendment. Attend a forum or lecture to discuss the 13th Amendment and its impact, then and now. Read the 13th Amendment in its entirety.

Teach someone about the 13th Amendment.

Write about or discuss the 13th Amendment in a social media post, broadcast, or article. Use

#NationalFreedomDay to post on social media.

History

In the mid-20th century, Major Richard Robert Wright Sr., born into slavery and freed after the Civil War, believed that there should be a day when freedom for all Americans is celebrated. Wright invited national and local leaders to meet in Philadelphia in order to make plans to designate February 1 as an annual memorial to the signing of the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution by President Abraham Lincoln on this date. The amendment freed all U.S. slaves.

One year after Wright's death in 1947, both houses of the U.S. Congress passed a bill to make February 1 National Freedom Day. The holiday proclamation was signed into law on June 30, 1948, by President. It was the forerunner to Black History Day. Later Black History Month was officially recognized in 1976. Recognition of black history had been initiated by historian Carter G. Woodson in 1926.

The President may issue each year a proclamation designating February 1 as National Freedom Day to commemorate the signing by Abraham Lincoln on February 1, 1865, of the joint resolution adopted by the Senate and the House of Representatives that proposed the 13th amendment to the Constitution.

On this day many towns and cities have festivals. Some citizens reflect privately on the freedoms that the United States honors and appreciate the goodwill of the United States. In Philadelphia, wreath-laying at the Liberty Bell has been a tradition for many years to mark National Freedom Day. Symbols of the day may include a theme about freedom for all Americans.

By Akshit Jain



Update for the day #1319 | National Backward Day

National Backward Day is the day where the world gets turned upside down, inside becomes out, madness becomes sanity and day becomes night, at least in concept. There's just too much seriousness in the air, and sometimes you really just have to bend all the rules and let it all hang out.

National Backward Day is a fun day that encourages us to do things in an order that we would not usually do them in! Take a different direction. Who says that we have to have breakfast first? Why can't we start off the day with a slice of chocolate cake or a slice of pizza?

It won't hurt for one day of the year, right? After all, we all live our lives doing things the way that we think we are meant to, at least to a certain degree. And while your daily decisions may make logical sense, it is fun to have a day whereby you do everything differently.

History of National Backward Day

In almost every culture, there came a time of year when all the societal rules got turned on their head. Rome had Saturnalia, a day when all social norms were turned on their head. Gambling was no longer forbidden, and the masters took the day serving their slaves at the high table. During no other time was free speech actually permitted, especially amongst the slaves, but during Saturnalia, all manner of insult was allowed.

In terms of the date, this was created by Megan Emily Scott and Sarah Nicole Miller back in 1961. On the 29th of January, they were thinking about making arts and crafts, while they were busy on the Miller family farm milking the cows. This is when they had an idea! Later on in the evening, they sat down together and wrote down some rules.

It was not long before the idea got out and reached all of the people in the town. When the two women were walking around two days later, on the 31st of January, they noticed that everyone was doing things backwards.

How to celebrate National Backward Day

- Wear your clothes inside out and your underwear as your outerwear, or be a bit more reasonable and slip into your pajamas.
- Have a nice hot pizza for breakfast, and answer the phone with "Goodbye! Thank you for calling!"
- When you get to work, tell your boss you're glad he made it in today, and hand him a dollar as a bonus for all his hard work.
- When lunchtime comes around, have yourself a nice big helping of dessert.
- Greet everyone throughout the day with a goodbye, and as you walk out the door, say hello to everyone and tell them to have a great day.
- At night, when it's time to go bed, turn off that alarm, get into your work clothes, and crawl into bed.

You can also look at National Backward Day from more of a serious perspective. If there is a task that you have been trying to conquer for quite some time and you do not seem to be having much success with it, why not scrap your approach and do things differently?

This is something that a lot of people can relate to in the workplace. Sometimes it helps if you rip up the rule book and you look at things from a different point of view. If there is one day that you're going to give this a try, this is the day to do it.

By Hiral Songara



Update for the day #1320 | Bangalore to Be Environment Friendly With 455 New EV

The Bangalore Electricity Supply Company (BESCOM) takes pride in introducing charging stations in the country, and the city couldn't be more grateful. However, BESCOM will be installing an additional 455 charging stations for electric vehicles (EV) in the next three months.

The department, which had already installed 136 EV charging stations, including 30 DC EV fast chargers as well as 106 AC EV slow chargers, will be expanding the horizon of these charging stations with 455 more installations in the next three months. Earlier these stations could be found in BESCOM's office premises, Vidhana Soudha, Vikasa Soudha, KSRTC, BDA, Transport Department office and some RTO offices as well.

Now, among the 455 stations, 176 stations will be at BESCOM head office, and the rest will be installed at BMRCL, KSRTC, BBMP, and other premises.

According to the BESCOM managing director, Rajendra Cholan, the department is planning to install 25 kW direct current-based charging stations in the city. EV owners can easily charge their vehicles within 30 minutes.

The managing director also explained the cost of such stations in the report by Bangalore Mirror. He said, "Each charging point shall cost Rs 8 lakh. Each station shall have five charging points, wherein one charging station will cost close to Rs 40 lakh."

BESCOM is also in talks with the resident welfare associations as well as the highway authorities and hotels to install EV charging stations. Yes, Bangalore's apartment complexes and highways around the town may also have these stations in the near future. It's high time such steps are taken not just to raise environmental awareness, but to also adopt a habit that suits the cause

By Shreemanth B





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