

ENTREPRENEUR TIMES

**ABBS ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT CELL
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER**



CONTENTS

1. HealthKart raises \$135 million from Temasek and A91 Partners
2. Ignoring nations' debt risks can trigger global recession, warns FM Nirmala Sitharaman
3. Recession likely to hit India after June
4. 'The age of celebration of technology for technology sake is over': Satya Nadella
5. Tata Motors plans to raise \$500-600 million for EV business
6. Traders' body CAIT asks for Data Protection Bill in Budget session
7. PM Announces Project to Provide Essential Medical Supplies to Developing Nations
8. Adani may take legal action against US-based Hindenburg
9. Toyota CEO Akio Toyoda to step down; Lexus chief Koji Sato to take over
10. Walmart to raise minimum wage for U.S. hourly workers to \$14
11. Air India completes one year with Tata Group; CEO says progress has been 'nothing short of stunning'
12. ENTREPRENEUR QUOTES
13. Did you know?

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HealthKart raises \$135 million from Temasek and A91 Partners

HealthKart, a homegrown healthcare platform, on Monday, December 5, announced that it has raised \$135 million in a funding round led by Temasek, with participation from A91 Partners and Kae Capital. As per the company, the capital raised will be deployed towards the growth of in-house D2C brands, increase offline distribution, expand international operations, and make select acquisitions. Avendus Capital acted as the exclusive financial advisor to HealthKart for the transaction.

HealthKart, which is at more than Rs 1,000-crore annual revenue run rate, is a leading player in the consumer market with two brands – MuscleBlaze, a sports nutrition brand, and HKVitals, an online health supplement brand. MuscleBlaze is said to have grown rapidly over the last few years and now has a 25 percent share in India's sports nutrition market. HKVitals has about a 20 percent share of the online health supplement market.

HealthKart said in a statement that its products are used by more than a million consumers every month and are widely distributed across multiple channels – healthkart.com, D2C websites, offline grocers/chemists, over 140 HealthKart offline stores – as well as leading e-commerce and quick commerce platforms.

Announcing the fundraising, Sameer Maheshwari, Founder & CEO, HealthKart said, “We are delighted to partner with Temasek and A91 Partners in our mission to deliver innovative, high quality, yet affordable preventive care solutions to Indian consumers. Driving fitness and preventive health by addressing the nutritional gaps is a systemic trend which is taking off in a big way in India. With HealthKart's R&D capabilities and omnichannel distribution infrastructure, we are excited to lead the way.”



Ignoring nations' debt risks can trigger global recession, warns FM Nirmala Sitharaman

Speaking at the Voice of Global South Summit, the finance minister said strengthening multilateral development banks is key to addressing the global challenges of the 21st century.

The rising debt vulnerabilities of various nations, if ignored, can trigger a global recession, said Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

Speaking at the virtual Voice of Global South Summit on January 12, the minister said global debt vulnerabilities are on the rise and posed threats of systemic global debt crisis. "If left unaddressed, these mounting debt vulnerabilities can trigger a global recession and push millions under extreme poverty," she said.

In her remarks, the finance minister also said that strengthening multilateral development banks is key to addressing the global challenges of the 21st century. However, a major scale up of response mechanisms of international financial institutions and multilateral development banks is needed.

"We must explore mechanisms so that the support provided by these institutions is responsive to country-specific needs, sustainable, as well as scalable," she said on the first day of the two-day summit, adding that the pandemic had exposed vulnerabilities "at all levels" and that India's G-20 presidency is an opportunity as well as a responsibility to encourage collective solutions and rebuild trust in multilateralism.



Recession likely to hit India after June

Centre working towards handling it effectively: Union minister
Narayan Rane

Union Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Narayan Rane said India is likely to be hit with recession after June and the Centre was working towards handling it effectively and minimising its impact on the country,

“There is a global recession and it is in many countries. This is what I have gathered from the discussion in the meetings of the Union government. The recession is expected to hit India after June,” Rane said after giving an inaugural speech at the two-day G20 Infrastructure Working Group (IWG) meeting in Pune.

He said the lotus in the G20 India presidency symbol is good and has nothing to do with the BJP. “Even if one relates the lotus symbol of G20 with the BJP, then also, I am okay with it. The BJP’s lotus stands for sustainable development,” Rane said, praising Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the rising stature of India in the world.



The G20 IWG will provide direction to everyone on how to develop future cities, he said. “The use of technology while keeping in mind the impact on the environment for infrastructure development would be discussed in the two-day IWG,” he added.

The growth of India is on the right path and it was 10th in economic status in the world and has improved now and the aim is to be in fifth position by 2030, he added.

'The age of celebration of technology for technology sake is over': Satya Nadella

Suggesting that the age of celebration of technology for technology's sake is over, Microsoft Chairman and CEO Satya Nadella said it is now about technology and its use for everyone in the world, where India can contribute immensely.

Speaking at the 'Microsoft Future Ready Technology Summit' here, he also highlighted the "magic" of government programmes and India Stack co-evolving in the country.

"I had a chance to have a brief conversation with the Prime Minister, his vision and all the programmes, the yojanas and the India Stack. In fact the thing I'm realising is the magic of India Stack, because everything needs feedback. The yojanas or the policy and the technology stack co-evolving, that's just like a virtuous cycle that is unlike anything I have seen and it's just tremendous," Nadella said.



He said, "I absolutely think both of these are perhaps the greatest contributions that India can make to the world quite frankly. When I think about it, the idea that there is digital public good is great, but also there is some sort of new way to use them to make it possible for every society and economy to be more inclusive." Nadella was in conversation with IT industry veteran and Infosys co-founder Nandan Nilekani as part of the summit.

Stating that what he learns from India every time he comes here is the common man being able to use the greatest technology to do something that is useful to them, he said, "and it is not about tech for tech sake. That to me is what I think India can contribute."

Tata Motors plans to raise \$500-600 million for EV business

Tata Motors, already the market leader in the EV segment, has big plans to deepen its presence in the EV segment as India transitions to clean mobility.

Tata Motors, which dominates the electric vehicle segment in the Indian market, has plans to raise \$500-600 million from global investors for the EV business, Economic Times reported.

The carmaker has big plans to cement its presence in the EV segment with 10 new electric models by March 2026. It already commands bulk of the share of the EV segment in India.

The report added that the company has reached out to several marquee investors, impact funds, sovereign wealth funds from the Middle East, Korea and Singapore, as well as Canadian pension funds.



The transition to electric mobility in India will happen much faster than we are imagining. We are confident that we chose the right strategy," N Chandrasekaran, Tata Motors' chairman, had said during the recently held Auto Expo.

The company showcased 12 cars, including five electric models, and 14 trucks, including ones powered by hydrogen fuel cells, as it looks to deepen its clean vehicle push.

Traders' body CAIT asks for Data Protection Bill in Budget session



Traders' body Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) urged the government to introduce and pass the Digital Data Protection Bill in the upcoming Budget session of the Parliament. CAIT General Secretary Praveen Khandelwal in a statement said that the bill along with e-commerce policy and rules is necessary to ensure India's retail trade is not negatively impacted by the data collection and processing activities of big technology companies. "It is an admitted fact that global companies are violating the basic fundamentals of trade and misuse the personal and other data of Indian consumers to gain a competitive edge over local traders and retailers," he said.

In November 2022, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology had released the latest iteration of the draft Digital Personal Data Protection Bill 2022 and sought public feedback. According to the ministry, the bill envisages setting up a Data Protection Board of India to determine non-compliance with the provisions of the draft Bill, impose penalties for such non-compliance, and perform such other functions as the central government may assign to it under the provisions of the draft bill or any law.

In terms of the e-commerce policy, a draft of which was placed in the public domain in February 2019 for public consultations and suggestions from various stakeholders, is yet to be notified and implemented. On the other hand, the e-commerce rules, which specify the duties and liabilities of sellers on e-commerce marketplaces and inventory-based e-commerce entities including consumer grievance redressals, were notified in July 2020 and later amended in May 2021 but aren't notified yet.

PM Announces Project to Provide Essential Medical Supplies to Developing Nations

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a project under which India will provide essential medical supplies to developing nations in case of natural disasters or humanitarian crisis and proposed to set up a 'centre of excellence' to facilitate development solutions to these countries.

In his opening address at the concluding session of the Voice of Global South virtual summit, Modi also said that India will launch a 'science and technology initiative' to share its expertise with other developing nations.

He announced that New Delhi will institute new scholarships for students from developing countries to pursue higher education in India and create a new forum to connect young officers of foreign ministries of the countries.



"I would now like to announce a new 'Aarogya Maitri' project. Under this project, India will provide essential medical supplies to any developing country affected by natural disasters or humanitarian crises," Modi said.

"For synergising our diplomatic voice, I propose a 'Global-South Young Diplomats Forum', to connect youthful officers of our foreign ministries. India will also institute 'Global-South Scholarships' for students from developing countries to pursue higher education in India," he said.

In his remarks, Modi said India's approach towards development partnerships has been consultative, outcome oriented, demand driven, people-centric, and respectful of the sovereignty of partner countries.

Adani may take legal action against US-based Hindenburg

Hindenburg report on Adani Group: Corporate governance firm InGovern said that short selling is not shareholder activism and such campaigns could be disruptive for management and companies. InGovern's comments come in the wake of the report published by Hindenburg Research, a US-based short seller and activist investor group.

Hindenburg published a scathing report that accused the Adani Group of market manipulation and accounting fraud. The report triggered panic selling that eroded the cumulative market capitalisation of seven listed Adani Group companies by around Rs 1 lakh crore.

Short-selling is an investment or trading approach that predicts the decline in the value of a stock of a particular company.

Traders in the US use short selling as speculation, and investors or portfolio managers could use it as a hedge against the downside risk of a particular stock.

InGovern, in its report, also said that positive shareholder activism—when investors engage positively with management and work towards bringing about change – should be welcomed and not by short sellers who “are opportunist and very short-term focused”.

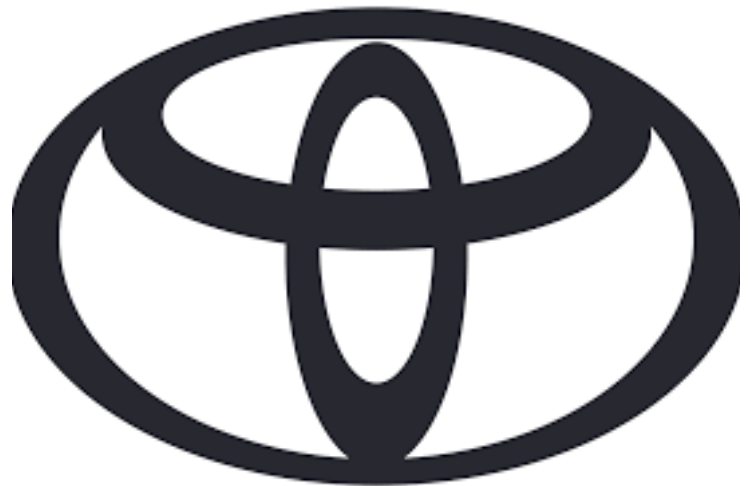
InGovern noted that short sellers and activist investors confronting companies is a common phenomenon in the US with blue chip firms such as Apple and Tesla coming under attack. However, they are not common in India.



Toyota CEO Akio Toyoda to step down; Lexus chief Koji Sato to take over

The chief executive of Toyota Motor Corp will step down as head of the company his grandfather founded, the Japanese automaker said on Thursday, handing over to the boss of its luxury car unit as it struggles to meet the shift to electric vehicles.

Koji Sato, the automaker's 53-year-old chief branding officer, who is also president of Toyota's luxury brand Lexus, will take over as chief executive from April 1, the company said, as Akio Toyoda becomes chairman.



The current chairman Takeshi Uchiyamada will drop his chairman title but remain on the board.

The issue of who would take over from Toyoda, the 66-year-old grandson of the company's founder, had increasingly been a focus for investors. But the timing of the succession announcement was a surprise.



Walmart to raise minimum wage for U.S. hourly workers to \$14

Walmart Inc said it will raise average hourly wages for its U.S. store workers starting next month, as it seeks to attract and retain employees in a tight domestic labor market.

Walmart's new wage hikes lift its average hourly wage pay to \$17.50 from the current \$17 an hour and will reflect in March 2 paychecks, the company said. The minimum wage will rise by as much as \$2 for staff at its U.S. stores to a range of \$14-\$19 per hour, depending on location, a spokesperson said in an email, adding that about 340,000 workers at about 3,000 stores will be eligible.

Walmart employs 1.6 million U.S. workers, a majority of whom work in rural and semi-urban areas.

The hikes, however, still lag rivals including Amazon, Costco and Target, which have been offering minimum pay of at least \$15 an hour since 2021.

Walmart's move comes as U.S. wage growth moderates. Data from earlier this month showed average hourly earnings growth for U.S. workers slowed to 0.3% in December, compared with 0.4% in the prior month.

Still, the labor market is resilient with rate of unemployment falling to a 5-decade low of 3.5% in December and number of job openings far outpacing the number of unemployed.

This has raised prospects that the U.S. Federal Reserve could further raise interest rates, putting further strain on minimum wage workers and household budgets.

The wage increases are a combination of regular annual increases and targeted investments in starting rates.



Air India completes one year with Tata Group; CEO says progress has been ‘nothing short of stunning’

Tata Group-controlled Air India CEO Campbell Wilson on Friday said that its progress over the last 12 months has been "nothing short of stunning". Tata Group took over the operations of debt-laden Air India a year ago, on 27 January 2022, from the Central government, marking the beginning of a new journey for the carrier. Tata Group tabled a winning bid of Rs 18,000 crore as the enterprise value of the airline against a reserve price of Rs 12,906 crore. The bid comprised a payment of Rs 2,700 crore and retaining a debt of Rs 15,300 crore.

Campbell, in a note to his colleagues on Friday, said that though there is much more to be done in the near future, it is "finalising a historic order of new aircraft to power future growth".

Air India CEO Campbell added that along with other initiatives and improvements over the last one year, the airline has also spent time on other ambitious actions such as merging Air India Express with Air Asia, or Vistara with Air India, or kicking off the establishment of a new InfoTech Centre, or an Aviation Academy.

"And that's not to mention our much talked-about short- and-medium term fleet expansion," the CEO and MD of Air India said in a communication to the employees.



ENTREPRENEUR QUOTES

- "Don't let others convince you that the idea is good when your gut tells you it's bad."

-Kevin Rose, co-founded Digg

- "If you can offer a free tier that provides a lot of value, it will naturally help your product to spread much more rapidly."

-Melanie Perkins, Co-founder of Canva

- "In the age of transparency, honesty, and generosity, even in the form of an apology, generate goodwill."

-Alexander Asseily, founder of Jawbone

- "Selling is not a pushy, winner-takes-all, macho act. It is an empathy-led, process-driven, and knowledge-intensive discipline. Because, in the end, people buy from people."

-Subroto Bagchi, Co-founder of Mindtree

- "You have to see failure as the beginning and the middle, but never entertain it as an end."

-Jessica Herrin, founder and CEO of Stella & Dot

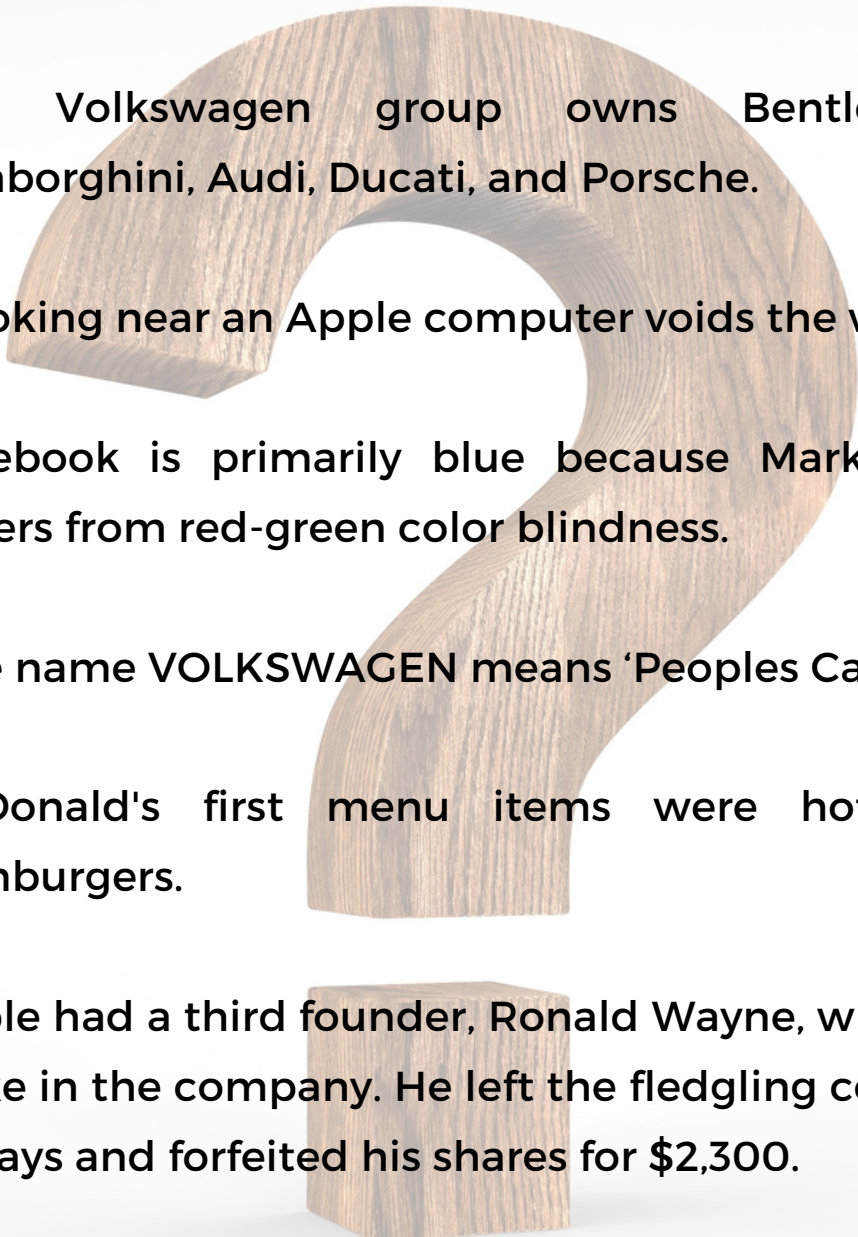
- "Fundraising is much easier now because of crowdfunding. Take advantage of that."

-Constantin Bisanz, Founder of Aloha

- "Be nicer to your customers than your competitors."

-Richard Reed, Co-Founder of Innocent Drinks

DID YOU KNOW?..

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- In 2000, Coca-Cola launched a stealth campaign against water called "Just say no to H2O."
 - The Volkswagen group owns Bentley, Bugatti, Lamborghini, Audi, Ducati, and Porsche.
 - Smoking near an Apple computer voids the warranty.
 - Facebook is primarily blue because Mark Zuckerberg suffers from red-green color blindness.
 - The name VOLKSWAGEN means 'Peoples Car' in German.
 - McDonald's first menu items were hot dogs, not hamburgers.
 - Apple had a third founder, Ronald Wayne, who had a 10% stake in the company. He left the fledgling company after 12 days and forfeited his shares for \$2,300.



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