

Sebi suspends trading in Bharat Global Developers over financial misrepresentation

New Delhi: Markets regulator Sebi on Monday suspended trading in Bharat Global Developers Ltd (BGDL) for financial misrepresentation, misleading disclosures, price manipulation, and offloading shares at inflated prices. Additionally, the regulator has barred the company, its managing director Ashok Kumar Sewada, CEO Mohsin Shaikh and directors—Dinesh Kumar Sharma and Nirali Prabhatbhai Karetha — and several preferential allottees of shares among the 18 entities from the securities market.

Also, Sebi, in its interim order, has frozen illegal profits to the tune of Rs 271.6 crore made by preferential allottees through the sale of shares. This came after the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) initiated an investigation into Bharat Global Developers following social media posts and a complaint on December 16, 2024. The inquiry was triggered by a dramatic 105-fold increase in BGDL's share price, which surged from Rs 16.14 in November 2023 to Rs 1,702.95 in November 2024. The regulator examined the matter to determine whether the company violated securities laws, including the Sebi Act, Prohibition of Fraudulent and Unfair Trade Practices (PFUTP) Regulations, and Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements (LODR) Regulations.

In its probe, Sebi found that BGDL replaced its management, approved preferential allotments to select individuals, and is-

sued false disclosures about business expansion and partnerships. These actions were part of a scheme to manipulate share prices and allow insiders to sell shares at artificially high prices. The company portrayed itself as a successful company with large contracts and technological expertise, none of which were true. This misrepresentation attracted unsuspecting investors and inflated the share price. Moreover, the financial statements of the company also appeared to misrepresent the true state of affairs of the company and its business. The financial statements revealed that till FY23, the company had negligible revenue, expenses, fixed assets and cash flows. Suddenly, however, the financial results from the quarter ended March 2024 showed a steep spike in revenues and expenses. This was accompanied by negligible fixed assets, negative cash flows from operating activities and huge amounts of trade receivables and payables. Further, the regulator noted that the number of shareholders surged from 10,129 in September 2024 to 44,976 in December 2024. However, over 99.9 per cent of shareholders held less than 1 per cent equity, while a few preferential allottees controlled most shares and profited significantly. Moreover, a bonus share issue (8:10) and a share split (10:1), scheduled for December 26, 2024, would have further diluted ownership and increased trading volumes. "Misstatements regarding its business, financials and prospects as disseminated by BGDL show an



effort to drum up the company's share price. "In light of the facts and findings... I find that in the garb of a compliant company, BGDL has created paper wealth now with a market cap of above Rs 12,000 crore, which is not founded on any genuine economic activity or production of any goods or services. In fact, such wealth has arisen from misrepresentation of the company's business and financials to general investors and shareholders," Sebi Whole Time Member Ashwani Bhatia said in his 25-page order. Accordingly, Sebi in its order said, "trad-

ing in the scrip of Bharat Global Developers Ltd is suspended till further orders". Also, the regulator has barred the company, its top management) and preferential allottees "from buying, selling or dealing in securities, or accessing capital market either directly or indirectly, in any manner whatsoever until further orders". Further, the compliance officer has been restrained from associating with any intermediaries registered with Sebi, any listed public company or any company that intends to raise money from the public, until further orders.

Nizam's Christmas Challenge: Royal tailor stitches against time

Hyderabad: John Burton adjusted his coat as he stepped into the chilly evening of December 24, 1950. The air was crisp, and the streets of Hyderabad were brimming with activity. But Burton's mind was far from the daily hustle. His meeting with Mir Osman Ali Khan, the 7th Nizam, had left him in a predicament unlike any he had faced before. It was a catch-22 situation indeed. The Nizam, with his towering persona and penchant for surprising orders, had summoned Burton to the King Kothi Palace. The royal outfitter had arrived promptly, not daring to delay. Inside the opulent chamber, the Nizam had expressed his desire to attend the midnight Christmas mass at St. Joseph's Cathedral in Gunfoundry. But it wasn't just about his attendance. He wanted himself and sixty of his noblemen dressed in freshly tailored suits — overcoats, pants, and shirts — by nightfall. Burton's pulse quickened as he processed the demand. Sixty suits in six hours? Impossible. But saying no to the Nizam was equally out of the question. Few could afford to defy him, and Burton wasn't

one of them. Exiting the palace, he glanced at his wristwatch. The hands seemed to tick louder, each second a reminder of his dwindling time.

Back at his workshop in Secunderabad, Burton lit his pipe, its wispy smoke curling into the air as he contemplated his next move. It wasn't long before inspiration struck. Burton sprang into action, summoning every tailor he could reach across Hyderabad. Word spread like wildfire, and soon, his workshop transformed into a buzzing hive of activity.

The room was alive with the sounds of fabric being cut, sewing machines whirring, and the occasional chatter of tailors coordinating their tasks. Each person was assigned a specific role: some focused on cutting fabric, others stitched shirts, a few tackled pants, while the most skilled among them handled the intricate coats. Burton moved among them like a conductor leading an orchestra, his pipe bobbing as he barked orders. "Faster! Precision matters, but so does speed!" he hollered, his voice cutting

through the din. Despite the pressure, the camaraderie among the tailors kept morale high. They worked tirelessly, driven by the challenge and the fear of disappointing the Nizam.

As the hours ticked by, the first completed pieces began to take shape. A sense of triumph spread through the workshop as the pile of finished garments grew. The tailors worked with a rhythm born of experience and determination, knowing the importance of their task. Finally, as the clock struck 10:30 p.m., the last coat was stitched, the final button secured. Burton inspected each garment meticulously, ensuring they met the Nizam's exacting standards. Satisfied, he wasted no time loading the suits into his carriage and making his way to King Kothi.

The Nizam awaited him, his piercing gaze softening as Burton presented the completed suits. A smile crept across his face—a rare gesture from the ruler known for his stoic demeanor. "You've done well, Burton," he said simply, his voice laced with approval. Dressed in their new attire, the

Nizam and his noblemen made their way to the midnight mass. The sight of the group, resplendent in their matching suits, left the congregation in awe. The Nizam, known for his dedication to his people, demonstrated yet again his respect for all faiths. It was a moment that highlighted the secular fabric of his rule. Not just this. The Nizam also gifted the Cathedral a clock, an oil painting of the Blessed Mother and Christ Child (Madonna and Child by Bartolome Esteban Murillo), chandeliers and furniture in 1953. The next morning, as Burton reflected on the whirlwind night, he felt a sense of pride. It wasn't just about fulfilling the order; it was about rising to the occasion. The memory of that night stayed with him, a testament to the power of teamwork, determination, and respect for tradition. Though detractors might paint the Nizam as miserly or communal, Burton saw a different side. The ruler who honored the spirit of Christmas with such fervor couldn't be confined to simplistic labels. And for Burton, the night was a reminder of the resilience required when dealing with a maverick ruler.

Polluting shipwrecks are a ticking time-bomb at the bottom of our oceans

At the bottom of the oceans and seas lie more than 8,500 shipwrecks from two world wars. These wrecks have been estimated to contain as much as 6 billion gallons of oil, as well as munitions, toxic heavy metals and even chemical weapons. For decades, these wrecks have largely lain out of sight and out of mind. But all this time, their structures have been degrading, inexorably increasing the chances of sudden releases of toxic substances into the marine environment. In parts of the globe, climate change is exacerbating this risk. Rising ocean temperatures, acidification and increasing storminess accelerate the breakdown of these wrecks. Of course, wrecks from the world wars are far from the only ones to be found at the bottom of the sea, with many others adding to the problem. The cost of addressing this global issue has been estimated at US\$340 billion (£261 billion). How many of these wrecks pose a threat to people's safety, to coastal communities and to the environment? What can be done – and why haven't we done it sooner? Mapping the problem

The raw figures in dollars and the numbers of wrecks on the map rightly cause concern. Work by researchers such as Paul Heersink have drawn together different datasets to help visualise the scale of the challenge. Yet these figures, and the position of dots on maps, may also give a false sense of certainty.

It remains the case that the world's oceans and seas are not as well mapped as we would like, with about 23% having been described and mapped in detail. Even that level of detail often falls short of what we need to positively identify a wreck, let alone determine the risk it might pose. There is an ongoing global push to improve our mapping of ocean space under the auspices of the Seabed 2030 project, which is looking to reach a universal resolution of 100x100m. That means one "pixel" of information would be equivalent to about two football pitches. This will be transformative for our understanding of the ocean floor, but will not reveal the detail of all those things that you could hide within those two football pitches (which includes quite a few wrecks).

Many of the wrecks that may pose the greatest problems are found in shallower coastal waters, where government mapping initiatives and work by industry provide much higher resolutions, yet still the challenge of identification remains. What about archival records? Historical records, such as those held by Lloyd's Register Foundation in London, are fundamental to bringing greater certainty to the scale and nature of the challenge. They contain the details of ship structures, cargos carried and last known positions prior to loss. The accuracy of those positions, however, is variable, meaning that knowing exactly where on the seabed a wreck might be, and so how to survey it and assess its risk, is not straightforward. This is placed in stark relief by the work of British maritime archaeologist Innes McCartney and oceanographer Mike Roberts, whose detailed geophysical and archival investigations in the Irish Sea demonstrated that historic wrecks have been frequently misattributed and mislocated. This means that the dots on the map are often in the wrong places, and up to 60% can be sitting in unknown locations on the sea floor. A

race against time

Most of the wrecks causing greatest concern are of metal, or metal and wood construction. The steel in these wrecks is slowly degrading, increasing the chance of cargos being spilt, and components breaking down. However, this is only part of the risk. The sea is becoming an ever busier place, as we carry out more intensive fishing and ramp up the construction of offshore wind farms and other energy installations to meet net zero commitments. These all affect the seabed and can physically disturb or change the dynamics of wreck sites. There is increasing global recognition of the need to address this problem. It has remained unresolved to date because of the complex international and interdisciplinary challenge it poses. Many of the wrecks lie in waters off countries that have nothing to do with the original owner of the ship. How then, do we determine who is responsible? And who pays for the clean-up – especially when the original owner benefits from the legal loophole of sovereign immunity? Under this concept, the flag State (the country where the ship is registered) cannot be held responsible under international law and therefore is not legally obliged to pay up. Beyond these fundamental questions of responsibility, there are technical challenges. It's difficult to know exactly how many wrecks of concern there are, and how to locate them. So how do we assess their condition and determine if intervention is needed? And if so, how do we intervene? Each of these questions is a complex challenge, and solving them requires the contributions of historians, archaeologists, engineers, biologists, geophysicists, geochemists, hydrographic surveyors, geospatial data analysts and engineers. This has already been happening, with regional



projects making critical headway and demonstrating what can be achieved. However, the immense scale of the problem outweighs the amount of work done to date. New technologies are clearly critical, as are new attitudes. At the heart of the problem is an issue of knowledge and certainty – is this the wreck we think it is, does it pose a problem and if so, over what time scale? Advances in sub-sea drones known as Autonomous Underwater Vehicles (AUVs), which are fitted with an array of sensors to measure the seabed and detect pollutants, could help enhance our knowledge about the locations of wrecks, what they're carrying and their state of deterioration. AUVs can provide relatively cheap, high resolution data that produces fewer emissions than a comparable survey campaign conducted from a large research vessel. But we also need to share that information, and compare it with data from ar-

chives to help generate knowledge and higher levels of certainty. Too often, underwater surveys and investigations occur in silos, with data held by individual agencies or companies, preventing a rapid and cumulative increase in understanding. The severity of the environmental and safety risk posed by wrecks on the ocean floor, and how it changes over time, is not fully known. But this is a problem we can solve. Action is needed now, driven by a robust regulatory and funding framework, and technical standards for remediation. A global partnership – codenamed Project Tangaroa – has been convened to stimulate that framework – but political will and financing is required to make it a reality. Through targeted archival and survey work, and by sharing data and ideas, we can chart a course to a future where the sea is not a place where we ignore things today that will threaten us tomorrow.

A very odd turn by cricket's reigning master of spin

In the middle of the tributes and praise being showered upon Ravichandran Ashwin, it appears to be a bit churlish to ask, but why now? In the middle of a series? Let's keep that for later. After paying due salutes to a cricketer whose India career began as a white-ball bowler with a bagful of tricks, but finished as a Test giant. You'd have heard it by now, but this is Ashwin as of today: India's second-highest Test wicket-taker after Anil Kumble, No 4 on the all-time spinners' list behind Muthiah Muralitharan, Shane Warne and Kumble; No 7 overall. Behind those numbers is Ashwin, the competitor -- leader of India's spin attack with success and ferocity, a major figure as India pushed towards become an all-format team capable of taking on anyone anywhere. His alliance with Ravindra Jadeja was to establish India's unbeatable domestic run in home Test series for over 12 years, before the crushing 3-0 defeat to New Zealand a few months ago. Earlier in his career, Ashwin was part of India's two ICC title-winning teams, the 2011 World Cup and the 2013 Champions Trophy, in which he played in two matches each. It

was in his 14 away Test victories where Ashwin's influence must also be recognised. He took 71 wickets in those vital Test wins at an average (22.53) and an economy (2.58) better than his overall record, and a strike rate of 52.3. He was central to India's 2015 Test series triumph in Sri Lanka after 22 years, player of the series with 21 wickets. When India beat West Indies 2-0 a year later, he was player of the series again, with 17 wickets and two centuries in the two wins. At home, he loomed in 47 Test victories, 303 wickets @ 18.16, SR 39.9. Post 2011, India started preparing rank turners at home as a Test match policy following two 4-0, 4-0 drubbings in England and Australia. Ashwin often opened the bowling in Tests, leaving visiting batters hapless and clueless at his accuracy and relentlessness. He remains a cricket nerd, whose game is always a work in progress, looking for more. It is routine to study opponents, but it's a special kind of student who watches every ball of an entire series being played by the next team to play India, like he said he did before England toured India in February 2021. His phone has

got an app, he says, to sort out speeds and lines of attack, and there's a data guy on his speed dial. After he was dropped for the 2014 Adelaide Test, Ashwin focussed on his action. Spotting the error and modifying it in the nets, he worked on opening the hip and preventing his front foot from going across the body at point of delivery. Post 2015, it was to alter his line of attack, give him greater revs and bring greater reward, particularly against right-handers outside Asia. Ashwin gave notice, heft and range to Chennai tennis ball cricket's sudokku -- the carrom ball. An alternative to the off spinners' doosra, with the knuckle and the bent middle finger flicking the ball out, turning from leg to off. His bowling candy box contained all sorts that he could pull out -- the off break, the top spinner, the arm ball, the side spinner, the carrom ball, the skidder, and no doubt there's something else being developed as we speak. He worked constantly on various components of bowling, the run-up, its angle, stride length, the pace of arm, position of wrist, speed variations, body position at the delivery crease, pivot follow through. Ravichandran Ashwin, PhD (Right Hand Off Break).



A seminar titled "How to Crack Civil Services in the First Attempt: UPSC Master Class" was held at the Indian Institute of Management and Commerce (IIMC), Hyderabad. The event was organized by VINGS Media and G5 Media Group in association with 21st Century IAS Academy.

P. Krishna Pradeep, Chairman of KP's 21st Century IAS Academy, served as the keynote speaker. Addressing an audience

of over 300 students, he emphasized the importance of qualifying for civil services, which grants individuals legitimate authority to serve society. During his speech, he highlighted a case where Mr. Anudeep Durishetty, the Collector of Hyderabad and 2017 Civil Services Exam topper, resolved an issue involving an elderly couple forced out of their home by their children. Using his authority under the 2007 Act, Mr. Durishetty ensured the couple could reclaim their prop-

erty, showcasing empathetic and efficient governance. Dr. Bhavani Shankar, Chief Mentor of the academy, emphasized the role of strategy, discipline, and time management in cracking the UPSC exam.

He noted that questions often derive from topics covered as early as the 6th standard curriculum, underscoring the need for a strong foundational understanding. The event also marked the launch of exclusive

study materials authored by the academy's experts which are kept in the college library to benefit students preparing for the civil services examination.

Principal K. Raghuvier welcomed the gathering and offered valuable advice to aspirants. The event also saw participation from Vice Principals Dr. D. Thirumala Rao and Dr. G. Santoshi, along with G5 Media Directors Giri Prakash and Ganesh.

Sailaja Reddy Hosts Enchanting Christmas Celebration for Underprivileged Children through Sailaja Aryan Foundation

Hyderabad: Socialite, entrepreneur, and philanthropist Sailaja Reddy, through her NGO Sailaja Aryan Foundation, created a magical Christmas celebration for the children from REACH BEYOND, a program dedicated to first-generation learners from economically challenged backgrounds. The festive event took place at the charming Barefoot Cafe in Banjara Hills, transforming an ordinary evening into an extraordinary experience of joy and fellowship. Thanks to the unwavering generosity and empathy of Ms. Sailaja Reddy, the children enjoyed a delightful evening filled with sumptuous snacks, lively music, and the excitement of mingling with local celebrities. A highlight of the night was the interactive cake mixing event, where participants created a special festive cake using fresh juices, spreading laughter and joy among the children. "Seeing the smiles on their faces as they sang Christmas carols and participated in various activities made all the effort worthwhile," said Sailaja Reddy. "It's truly heartwarming to witness the impact that such moments can have on these children's lives." To ensure every child could join in the festivities, a special bus was arranged to transport them from REACH BEYOND to the cafe. The evening

was a resounding success, leaving an indelible mark on the hearts of everyone present. Sailaja Reddy's continuous dedication towards uplifting underprivileged children through the Sailaja Aryan Foundation exemplifies a strong commitment to social responsibility. Her collaboration with local organizations amplifies the impact of her philanthropic efforts and creates a brighter future for those in need. "We are immensely grateful to Ms. Sailaja Reddy for her unwavering support and for making dreams come true for these children," said a representative of REACH BEYOND. "Her efforts not only provide them with memorable experiences but also inspire hope and motivation for their futures."



Dr. Narendranadh Meda Introduces Esaote's Cutting-Edge O-Scan MRI Machine to Enhance Podiatric (Foot & Ankle) care in Hyd

Hyderabad: Dr. Narendranadh Meda, one of the city's leading Vascular, Endovascular & Podiatric Surgeon, has recently added a state-of-the-art Esaote's O-Scan MRI machine from Esaote to his hospital, further elevating the standard of care provided to patients in Hyderabad and surrounding regions. The acquisition of this advanced diagnostic technology is expected to significantly improve the accuracy and efficiency of musculoskeletal and soft tissue imaging, enabling more precise diagnosis and personalized treatment plans for patients.

Dr. Narendranadh Meda, who has a reputation for pioneering advancements in Podiatric care, expressed his enthusiasm about the new addition: "The O-Scan MRI machine is a game-changer for podiatric patients. It enhances our ability to diagnose complex conditions at an early stage, which is crucial for effective treatment and positive patient outcomes. With this machine, we can provide our patients with faster, more accurate imaging, helping us make informed decisions on treatments and interventions."

Mr Dheeraj Nasa, Country Business Director, Esaote Asia Pacific Diagnostic Private Limited said "We are thrilled to collaborate with Dr. Narendranadh Meda in bringing Esaote's revolutionary O-Scan MRI machine to Hyderabad. This state-of-the-art technology is a game-changer for podiatric care, offering unparalleled precision in diagnosing foot and ankle conditions. The O-Scan's advanced imaging capabilities will empower clinicians to provide more accurate, faster diagnoses, ultimately enhancing patient care and treatment outcomes. At Esaote, we remain committed to advancing



medical innovation and improving healthcare for communities worldwide, and this partnership is a significant step forward in transforming podiatric care in India." In addition to its unmatched imaging capabilities, the O-Scan MRI offers a user-friendly interface, streamlined workflow, and significantly reduced scan times, making it an ideal choice for busy medical practices and improving overall patient experience. The technology supports a wide range of diagnostic procedures, from

evaluating musculoskeletal problems to identifying potential soft tissue conditions or abnormalities that can impact the underlying condition.

Patient Benefits of Using O-Scan MRI by Esaote
The O-Scan MRI by Esaote is a cutting-edge diagnostic tool that brings numerous advantages to both patients and healthcare providers. Its innovative features ensure that patients receive the highest quality of care, comfort, and precision in their di-

agnostic process. Here are some key patient benefits: 1. High-Quality Imaging for Accurate Diagnosis 2. Enhanced Patient Accessibility 3. Improved Patient Confidence and Peace of Mind By offering clearer imaging, reduced scan times, improved comfort, and minimal invasiveness, the O-Scan MRI ensures that patients can receive the highest standard of care while experiencing less discomfort and reduced risk. This results in better overall patient outcomes and satisfaction.

AINU Surgeons Conquer Rare Pancake Kidneys Tumor with Revolutionary Minimal Invasive Procedure

Hyderabad: A 45-year-old woman from Kompally, Hyderabad, was diagnosed with a rare congenital condition where her kidneys were fused and pancake-shaped, instead of the usual bean-like structure. Moreover, the kidneys were positioned abnormally lower than their usual location. Despite this, she lived with this condition for 45 years. Recently, a cancerous tumor developed in these fused kidneys. The occurrence of pancake kidneys itself is a rarity estimated to be seen in only 1 in 375,000 cases globally. A tumor in such an anomalous kidney is even more rare. Such fused kidneys are medically termed as lump kidneys, and when located abnormally, they are called ectopic kidneys. Mapping tumors in such cases is challenging due to the complexity of blood supply and their intricate anatomy. At the Asian Institute of Nephrology and Urology (AINU), a breakthrough was achieved using 3D imaging technology. A CT scan of the patient was integrated with specialized software to create a 3D model, which provided critical insights into the anatomy of the fused kidneys, their blood supply, and the tumor's location.

Dr. S.M. Ghose, Director of the Robotic and Uro-Oncology Department at AINU, shared details about this unique case.

"When the patient came to us, tests revealed the presence of a cancerous tumor. The CT scan showed a highly complex structure with fused kidneys, abnormally located in the pelvis. Identifying the exact location and relation of the tumor to the surrounding vital structures in such cases is extremely difficult. Hence, we opted for 3D modeling, which gave us insights for pre-surgical planning significantly, particularly for key-hole surgeries.

Typically, cancerous tumors in kidneys often require the removal of part of the kidney or the kidney itself. However, given the rare anatomy in this case and the delicate blood supply, we decided to perform minimally invasive key-hole surgery using advanced technology." Under the leadership of AINU's Managing Director, Dr. C. Mallikarjuna, a dedicated team embarked on this rare and complex surgical procedure. Seasoned uro-oncologist Dr. Rajesh played a vital role in the

surgery. Utilizing the 3D model, the team was able to precisely plan and remove the tumor through just tiny incisions. This ensured minimal blood loss, and the patient was discharged within three days, having fully recovered.



able to precisely plan and remove the tumor through just tiny incisions. This ensured minimal blood loss, and the patient was discharged within three days, having fully recovered.

DICV first and only manufacturer to achieve new IGBC Platinum Certification for, Sustainability

Hyderabad: Daimler India Commercial Vehicles (DICV), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Daimler Truck AG, has achieved a remarkable milestone by becoming the first manufacturing facility in India to receive the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) Platinum certification under the latest and most stringent Version 2 standards. Out of 31 factories, DICV's state-of-the-art Oragadam plant was the only facility to earn this recognition for its excellence in green manufacturing and sustainability. The IGBC Platinum certification is globally recognized as a benchmark of excellence in sustainable building practices, aligning with the World Green Building Council's mission to promote global sustainability. This achievement highlights DICV's ongoing commitment to integrating environmental sustainability into its core operations, reducing its ecological impact and enhancing operational performance.

DICV's Oragadam facility serves as a model for sustainable industrial development, incorporating innovative measures in energy efficiency, water conservation, renewable energy, waste management, and biodiversity enhancement. These efforts align with DICV's strategic approach to sustainability, guided by the SPUR principle – Source, Produce, Use, Regenerate – a key element of its business strategy. The facility delivers tangible benefits such as reduced resource dependency, cost optimization, and an enhanced workplace environment.

Speaking about this prestigious recognition, Satyakam Arya, Managing Director & CEO, Daimler India Commercial Vehicles,



said, "The IGBC Platinum certification is more than just an accolade; it represents DICV's unwavering commitment to sustainability and innovation. This achievement goes beyond setting a benchmark for green manufacturing - it underscores our responsibility to make a lasting, positive impact on both the environment and our community. At our manufacturing facility in

Oragadam, we prioritize advanced green practices and the well-being of our stakeholders, proving that industrial facilities can not only thrive but also contribute meaningfully to the global sustainability movement. This milestone positions DICV as a leader in sustainable development, and we hope it inspires others in the industry to embrace forward-thinking and responsible sustainability

practices." This achievement highlights the transformative potential of sustainability in manufacturing, setting a precedent for the global automotive and commercial vehicle industries. By aligning with Daimler Truck AG's global sustainability roadmap, DICV continues to lead by example, driving innovation and supporting sustainability goals both in India and worldwide.

Harsimrat Writes Amit Shah Demanding High Level Judicial Probe Into Assassination Attempt On Sukhbir Badal

Chandigarh (JAG MOHAN THAKEN), Dec 23: Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) leader and Member of Parliament, Biba Harsimrat Kaur Badal, has written to Union Home Minister Amit Shah, demanding a high-level judicial probe into the shocking incident of Assassination Attempt on Sukhbir Badal.

Stating the act of Assistant Sub Inspector Jasbir Singh and ASI Hira Singh of the Punjab Police, in a party release, an extraordinary act of bravery for protecting Sukhbir Badal from the sudden attack, MP Harsimrat Kaur Badal, recommended that Jasbir Singh and Hira Singh's extraordinary act of bravery on duty be acknowledged at the national level through an award of the President's Medal. She also came down heavily on the Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and his government in Punjab for "issuing provocative justifications for acts amounting to killings of political rivals." She pointed out minutes before the assassination attempt on Mr Badal's life, senior officers of the Punjab Police, including a superintendent, (SP) were busy chatting up a few controversial figures who have a criminal track record so high profile that almost every Station Head Officer in the state knew these criminals' identity.

She alleged that the "these controversial figures were then allowed to move freely and were literally guided to their intended "victim". Unbelievably, there were no security officials in plain clothes around Mr Badal at

the prefixed hour to assist him, allowing the assassin an absolutely unhindered access to their target." Ms Badal further said that it was clear that the assassination attempt was neither a stray incident nor was it an individual act by "a lone wolf." It was a clearly sponsored, pre-planned, premeditated act and a part of a deep-rooted conspiracy to weaken and eliminate Sikh leadership. This was aimed at rendering the brave and patriotic Sikh quom totally leaderless and in a state of utter confusion and fratricidal war," she said. Senior Akali leader Sardar Sukhbir Singh Badal Monday recommended a President's Police Medal for Assistant Sub Inspector of the Punjab Police, Jasbir Singh and ASI Hira Singh (Belt Number 3573, Amritsar City) for the officers' "act of exceptional and exemplary courage and selfless devotion to duty" on the precincts of Shri Harmandar Sahib, Amritsar, on December 4 when an assassination attempt was made on Mr Badal's life. A release distributed among media persons states that in a letter to the Union Home Minister Amit Shah, copies of which have been claimed forwarded to the concerned government officials including the DGP, Punjab, Mr Badal said, "It was only because of the blessings of the great Guru Sahiban and grace of the Almighty that ASI Jasbir Singh and ASI Hira Singh happened to be present there that day." "It was remarkable how Jasbir Singh and ASI Hira

Singh displayed rare and noble courage and commitment to their duty and risked their lives to safeguard the sanctity of Sikhism's most sacred shrine, Shri Harmandar Sahib, and to save my life," he said. Mr Badal further said, "The prevention of the tragic sequence of events was nothing short of providential, especially as those bent upon vitiating the sanctity of the place and the atmosphere of peace and communal harmony in Punjab seemed to enjoy" brazen patronage of the high and mighty in the state." The Shiromani Akali Dal has also supported S Sukhbir Singh Badal's recommendation to the union home minister to award the President's Police Medal to ASI Jasbir Singh and ASI Hira Singh for showing exceptional and exemplary courage and selfless devotion to duty on the precincts of

Shri Harmandar Sahib, Amritsar on Decem-



ber 4 when an assassination attempt was made on Mr Sukhbir Badal's life.

Strengthening the roots of an agri-carbon market

Carbon markets hold the potential to transform Indian agriculture, turning sustainable farming practices into a lucrative opportunity for farmers while combating climate change. In this, carbon pricing is a critical tool for mitigating climate change. It functions through compliance and voluntary carbon markets. Compliance markets, regulated by governments or international bodies such as the United Nations, impose emissions caps on companies. Businesses exceeding these caps must either purchase carbon credits from projects that mitigate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, such as agroforestry or sustainable agriculture projects, or pay carbon taxes for their extra emissions. In contrast, the voluntary carbon market operates without regulation, allowing organisations to trade carbon credits through mechanisms such as the Clean Development Mechanism, Verra, and Gold Standard, among others. Together, these systems aim to reduce GHG emissions and support global climate goals.

Carbon markets, their workingCarbon markets are gaining momentum. At COP29, in November 2024, for instance, a centralised carbon market under the UN got a green signal. Last year, India announced that it would launch its own compliance and voluntary carbon markets. Recently, the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development, in collaboration with the Indian Council of Agricultural Research and State universities, listed five agriculture carbon credit projects in Verra. Carbon markets rely on two key principles: additionality and permanence. Additionality ensures emission reductions happen only due to carbon credits, requiring farmers to adopt new practices. This means that those who already use sustainable methods are not eligible for credits. Permanence refers to the long-term durability of these benefits. Permanence guarantees these benefits last, such as ensuring carbon stored in soils through reduced tillage is not lost due to a return to conventional ploughing. Therefore, projects that aim to generate and trade carbon credits must adhere to certain conditions, including additionality and permanence.

To assess the readiness of India's agriculture sector for a full-scale carbon market, we must examine the existing carbon credit projects listed under non-governmental entities such as Verra. This highlights challenges and the necessary fixes before scaling up. If projects fail to deliver promised environmental benefits, producing unreliable credits, buyers may lose confidence and stop purchasing agriculture carbon credits. This deprives farmers of extra income and discourages the adoption of sustainable practices. Ensuring high-quality credits from the start of Indian carbon markets is crucial for trust and long-term farmer participation. In just four years, over 50 agriculture carbon farming projects have been listed in the Verra registry, targeting 1.6 million hectares of farmland in India. These projects aim to generate approximately 4.7 million carbon credits annually, equivalent to offsetting the GHG emitted from 11 billion miles driven by an average gasoline-powered vehicle. However, none of these projects is registered, which means carbon credits have not been issued



and that farmers have not received the money. Carbon farming projects in India

A recent study by the writers of this article published in *Climate Policy* — “Carbon farming in India: are the existing projects inclusive, additional, and permanent?” — examines seven such carbon farming projects in Haryana and Madhya Pradesh, focusing on socio-economic inclusiveness, additionality, and permanence. The findings show that marginalised communities and small farmers were largely excluded, with women making up only 4% of participants. Carbon farmers in these States cultivated significantly more land — 51% more in Haryana and 32% more in Madhya Pradesh — than non-carbon farmers. Among non-carbon farmers, 46% of the land was owned by non-marginalised castes (general castes) and 17% by Scheduled Caste-Scheduled Tribe (SC/ST) farmers, whereas among carbon farmers, 63% of the land was under non-marginalised castes and only 13% was owned by SC/ST farmers. Further, while some sustainable practices were already in place before the projects began, others such as zero tillage, alternate wetting and drying, intercropping, reduced chemical fertilizer use, micro-irrigation, and tree planting were newly adopted, which satisfies the additionality condition. This demonstrates that, when implemented effectively, these projects can genuinely reduce GHG emissions. Significant challenges remain in these projects: 45% of farmers reported no communication, over 60% lacked training in new techniques, and 28% stopped sustainable practices by the second year, mainly due to insufficient financial incentives. Alarmingly, 99% had not received carbon credit payments, with additional issues including yield penalties and inadequate information on carbon farming. Despite these setbacks, projects managed by startups focused solely on carbon credits, termed “Carbon Core” in this study, performed better than those run

by subsidiaries or offshoots of larger corporations. However, these projects were less inclusive of smallholders and marginalised communities. To address these issues, India's carbon market must incentivise socially inclusive projects by offering higher prices for carbon credits from projects that include smallholders and marginalised communities. Effective communication, regular training, and guaranteed, timely payments can enhance farmer participation. Collaborating with national and international research institutions to target suitable regions and interventions can prevent yield penalties and protect food security. An improving

scienceThe science of measuring soil carbon and GHG emissions is expected to improve over time. In recent years, digital technologies have advanced significantly. Tools such as remote sensing, satellite imagery, drones, and sensors for monitoring project activities will soon become more accessible. However, for carbon markets to succeed, the critical focus must be addressing the grand old implementation challenges. Building a thriving agricultural carbon market in India requires collaboration among policymakers, researchers, and private entities to ensure inclusivity, transparency, timely rewards for farmers, and improved project implementation.

HDFC Bank Carries Out First Gold Forward Deal from GIFT City

Hyderabad: HDFC Bank, India's leading private sector bank, has become the first domestic bank to execute a gold forward deal from GIFT City. The deal was executed by HDFC BANK GIFT City IBU in collaboration with Hindustan Platinum Pvt. Ltd., a global refiner and manufacturer of high purity precious metal products and industrial services.

Regulators have enabled onshore entities with gold price exposure to hedge their risk through GIFT City. HDFC Bank is committed to be a part of the development of the GIFT City bullion ecosystem. The Bank's IBU in GIFT City serves as a trading and clearing member on the Indian International Bullion Exchange (IIBX).

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Arup Rakshit, Group Head – Treasury, HDFC Bank said, “We are delighted to announce

 **HDFC BANK**
We understand your world

the successful execution of the first gold forward deal from GIFT City. This achievement underscores our commitment to leveraging the opportunities offered by GIFT City to deliver innovative and efficient financial solutions. HDFC Bank will endeavour to provide tailored hedging solutions to the gems and jewellery sector, as well as various industrial sectors, to effectively manage their risks.” HDFC Bank, a nominated agency, is in the process of becoming a special category client on IIBX and is now offering gold and silver forwards from GIFT City.

How Periyar binds together Kerala, Tamil Nadu: Significance of a recent meeting of two southern CMs

Of seminal importance for the followers of Dravidian ideology, Vaikom in Kottayam, Kerala, saw the first organised temple entry movement for Dalits in 1924 as people from the oppressed castes launched the satyagraha to make public roads leading to the Sri Mahadeva temple in Vaikom accessible to all sections of society. Among those who were an integral part of the satyagraha were social reformer E V Ramasamy, popularly referred to as "Periyar", who founded the Self-Respect Movement in the then Madras Presidency. Periyar and his wife Nagamma spent time in prison in connection with the movement. With entry to the paths leading to the temple paths restricted to dominant-caste Hindus, in March 1924 the Kerala Congress Committee called for a walk through the restricted paths, leading to the arrest of several of its leaders. It was only in 1936, 11 years later, that the oppressed castes were allowed entry into the temple.

On December 12, marking the centenary of his historical link between the two states, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin and his Kerala counterpart Pinarayi Vijayan met in Vaikom to inaugurate an inter-state collaborative project on social justice: a renovated Thanthai Periyar Memorial and Periyar Library. In 2023, marking the commencement of the Vaikom Satyagraha's centenary celebrations, Stalin said, "It was through this movement that E V Ramasamy emerged as Periyar". Periyar means the respected or great one.

Periyar entered the Vaikom Satyagraha at a time when most of its leaders were arrested, according to author Pazha Athiyaman. "The Congress asked for Periyar's support when many of its leaders in Kerala were arrested. Periyar was a prominent Congress leader from Tamil Nadu," he said, adding that even then Periyar was known for his anti-caste politics and seen as a mass leader. Athiyaman's book *Vaikom Porattom (Vaikom Struggle)* details Periyar's contribution to the satyagraha. According to Athiyaman, Periyar made several trips to Vaikom and was arrested more than once during the struggle. "He spent 67 days participating in the struggle and 74 days in prison for being arrested on account of the struggle," Athiyaman said. In his book, he writes that Periyar was first arrested when his campaign gained traction. On May 22, 1924, he was sentenced to simple imprisonment for one month, which he served in Arookutty prison. When he was let off, he returned to the struggle, leading to his arrest and a sentence of rigorous imprisonment for three months. Periyar was relentless in pursuing the struggle that he was called "Vaikom Veerar", or the 'hero of Vaikom'. "It is only apt that two Chief Ministers came together to remember Thanthai Periyar," said Athiyaman. According to DMK leaders, the commemoration of Periyar by Stalin and Vijayan has marked a new chapter in southern politics. It has come at a time when the southern states are attempting to band together over common concerns linked to delimitation, demographic changes, and tax devolution. "Here is a DMK chief minister collaborating with an alliance partner in INDIA, CPI(M)'s Pinarayi Vijayan. It sent the message that both the parties, and the INDIA bloc on the whole, are committed to so-

cial justice," said Madhimaran, a DMK leader who recently visited Vaikom to commemorate the satyagraha.

The Congress, the major alliance partner in the INDIA bloc, also worked the social justice line leading up to the Lok Sabha elections. The party and the INDIA bloc have also been demanding a country-wide caste census. In their politics, however, both Stalin and Vijayan are candid that they are not against religion, the way Periyar was. DMK and CPI(M) leaders have time and again said that many of their cadre are believers and that they do not discourage anyone from practising religion. "Periyar was very clear about the right to temple entry being a right to enter a public place. So, there is a statement they (the two parties and their CMs) wish to make about temples and worship, not pitting themselves as non-believers or agonistics, but as people who are bent on claiming public spaces," said author and academic V Geetha. The two leaders, however, have been vociferous critics of the BJP's Hindutva politics. "We want to say again and again that the BJP is against welfare politics and that the party is against social justice inscribed in the Constitution and the thoughts of Periyar. In coming together,



on social justice grounds, we have sent a message to the Centre that we are together in such fights for justice," said Madhimaran. Stalin has consistently said welfare measures cannot be called "revdi", or freebies, as the BJP does. "The message they are giving out is that there is a very large scope for politics based on social justice movement in the southern states," Madhimaran said. In 2022, the Tamil Nadu CM and DMK leader launched an "All India Social Justice Forum" to unite the Opposition around the message of social justice and the event in Vaikom last year marked Stalin's

outreach to Vijayan. "We share the same soul even if we are physically two," he told his Kerala counterpart at the time, peppering his speech with Malayalam, which he called "a language that belongs to the Dravidian family". Stalin said the Vaikom Satyagraha was "not only about Kerala but also benefited Tamil Nadu and India as a whole as a social justice movement". "Self-respect, rationality, socialism, equality, humanism, non-discrimination on the basis of blood and gender, women empowerment, social justice, scientific temper, and secularism were the ideals that Periyar stood for," he said.

Coconut oil 'edible', to invite tax cut: SC ruling on small packs

The question arose from the category under which the oil should be taxed, and back when the court first heard the case, India's indirect tax regime was built around excise. On Wednesday, when it finally pronounced that a small pack of coconut oil would be considered a cooking oil (unless the pack specifically mentions it is for hair), the regime is built around the Goods and Service Tax (GST). Cooking oil attracts 5% GST as compared to hair care products which attract 18%. The judgment comes as a relief to manufacturers and consumers alike, bringing clarity to a protracted tax dispute that had tied up courts, government departments and industry stakeholders since 2009.

At the heart of the debate was how to categorise a product widely used for both culinary and cosmetic purposes and whether the size of the container dictates the oil's purpose. The revenue department argued that small packs of coconut oil are primarily purchased as hair oil, citing market surveys to back its claim. It contended that packaging and marketing strategies are pivotal in determining usage, advocating for an 18% GST classification under hair care products. But manufacturers, including Madhan Agro Industries (India) Pvt Ltd and M/s Marico Ltd (which makes the popular Parachute brand) insisted that coconut oil, regardless of its packaging, is fundamentally an edible product. They pointed out that it has long been categorised as such under the Central Excise Tariff Act and that its dual-use nature should not lead to higher taxation. In its ruling, a bench comprising Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna and justices PV Sanjay Kumar and R Mahadevan rejected the revenue department's arguments, emphasising that tax classification



should align with common parlance and trade practices rather than speculative interpretations. The judgment highlighted the importance of aligning tax classifications with consumer usage and market realities.

"The mere fact that coconut oil is also capable of being put to use as a cosmetic or toilet preparation, by itself, would not be sufficient to exclude such oil from the ambit of 'coconut oil' and subject it to classification as 'hair oil,' as 'coconut oil' is name-specific... Small-sized containers are a feature common to both 'edible oils' as well as 'hair oils'. Therefore, there must be something more to distinguish between them for classification of such oil, be it under Chapter 15 or under Chapter 33, other than the size of the packing," held the bench. It also noted that coconut oil was clearly identified as edible oil under the First Schedule to the Central Excise Tariff Act, 1985, and also in perfect alignment with the corresponding entries in

the (Harmonised System of Nomenclature) HSN, which is an internationally standardised system developed and maintained by the World Customs Organisation for classifying products. The decision has broader implications than just GST rates. For consumers, this ruling translates into potentially lower prices for small packs of coconut oil, making them more affordable. For manufacturers, it provides clarity on tax obligations and an opportunity to streamline marketing strategies. Dinkar Sharma, company secretary & partner, Jotwani Associates, said that the ruling is a landmark in Indian tax jurisprudence, serving as a guide for both taxpayers and authorities in dealing with disputes over multi-use goods. "It encourages authorities to adopt a more scientific and objective approach while classifying goods, avoiding reliance on speculative factors such as consumer behavior or marketing techniques," he said.

Why now (December) is a better time to start your New Year resolutions

Are you always excited about New Year's resolutions, only for the enthusiasm to fade away within a few days or weeks? Psychologists have an innovative solution to help you stick to your resolutions – start them in December. Starting new year resolutions in December puts you into a soft practice and a habit-building zone (Photo: AI Generative by Vani Gupta/India Today) At the start of every new year, many people create a list of resolutions to improve their lives. For some, it's finally taking the plunge and joining a gym, committing to never pick up a cigarette again, or embarking on a journey of eating healthily every day. They wait for 1 January to give themselves a fresh start and channel the infamous "new year, new me" energy. And when January actually arrives and it is time to execute those resolutions, many find themselves struggling to follow through as the initial burst of motivation fades and old habits prove difficult to break. Psychologists, meanwhile, have an innovative solution to making your new year resolutions – start them in December. Start your new year resolution right away. Experts say that starting new year resolutions in December can improve the chances of sustaining them. The reasons why it works are ample.

Firstly, it puts you into a soft practice and a habit-building zone. Building the foundation for habit change takes time; it often requires multiple attempts and some experimentation to identify the best ways to disrupt the context that supports unwanted habits. "December's built-in challenges – like holiday treats and busy schedules – create an ideal testing ground. If someone can maintain their resolution during this demanding month, they're more likely to sustain it during less challenging times. Think of it as training with weights before running a race – when January arrives, the path feels lighter and more manageable," explains Dr Chandni Tugnait, a psychotherapist, life and business coach, and founder-director of Gateway of Healing. The December strategy also helps overcome the 'all-or-nothing' mindset. After the initial excitement of a New Year's resolution fades, it's easy for the goal to lose priority, leading you to revert to old habits. Taking a test run in December can mentally prepare you for the changes you plan to implement in the year ahead. "According to the Change Theory, when building new behaviours, a person goes through a cycle of precontemplation, contemplation, decision-making, action, maintenance, and relapse many times. So, if one is unable to maintain their new year resolution for a day or more, instead of taking it as a failure, view it as a slippage and start again," explains Charu Prabhakar, clinical psychologist at online mental health service platform Lissun.

By starting your resolution in December, you allow yourself to experience this cycle early, making it easier to stay resilient and recommit after a slip-up instead of losing hope and abandoning your resolution. Yash Sharma, a fitness coach who practises this approach himself, has already started working on his New Year's resolution of training early in the morning. He explains that the mind often perceives a New Year's resolution as an overwhelming task. "When the New Year begins, you spend



time deciding what to do, then push yourself to start, all while thinking you need to maintain it for the entire year. It feels like a massive challenge. However, if you start pushing yourself in December, it becomes easier for your mind to continue the habit into the next year," he shares. After the initial excitement of a New Year's resolution fades, it's easy for the goal to lose priority, leading you to revert to old habits. (Photo: Pexels) According to Dr Rahul Chandhok, Senior Consultant and Head Psychiatry at Artemis Lite Hospital, New Delhi, "December is the 'soft start' into resolutions. There is not as much tension and anxiety since the change in behaviour has been going on for weeks rather than just a cold turkey kind of change." When you start those resolutions in December, habits already take root, making the transition into the new year smoother. "The brain has already begun adapting to the changes, whether it's a new exercise routine or a different eating pattern," explains Dr Tugnait. Additionally, there is also an advantage to fine-tuning goals before the official new year begins. "Rather than diving in headfirst on 1 January, December provides time to adjust strategies and identify potential obstacles. This trial period helps create more realistic and sustainable resolutions, increasing the likelihood of long-term success," says Dr Tugnait. More ways to make your new resolutions successful. Of course, you can introduce or develop a habit at any time of the year. However, many people tend to join the craze for New Year's resolutions, even though habits require time and consistency to build. It is also very important to be realistic with the resolution you set. Here are some helpful hacks to give a longer life to your new year resolutions: "The goals should be Specific (example: I want to lose 5 kg), Measurable (I'll measure it on the weighing scale), Achievable (this has to be achieved in a span of 3 months), Relevant (This is relevant for me as I want to work on my physical health), and have a fixed Time of execution (I'll exercise between 6–7 pm). This approach of SMART goals has scien-

tifically shown to enhance chances of sustaining them," suggests psychologist Charu Prabhakar. Micro-milestone method Dr Tugnait suggests breaking down your main resolution into monthly mini-goals. Instead of saying, "I'll save Rs 50,000 this year," commit to saving at least Rs 3,000–Rs 4,000 each month. These smaller targets feel more achievable and provide regular wins to celebrate. Follow the two-day rule. Never skip your resolution-related activity for more than two consecutive days. "This flexibility prevents the 'all-or-nothing' mindset while main-

taining consistency. It's particularly effective for habits like exercise, meditation, or learning a new skill," says Dr Tugnait. Habit stacking. Link your new habits to existing daily routines. If you want to read more, pair it with your morning coffee or evening wind-down. These connections make new habits feel more natural and sustainable. Remember, meaningful change doesn't need a specific date – it needs commitment and strategic timing. But if you are planning to have new year resolutions, get in action right away!

Adani Portfolio of companies 'most attractive' among India corporates

Mumbai: The Adani Portfolio of companies appear "most attractive" among Indian corporates, according to Japanese brokerage Nomura, as other Indian corporates stay at 'expensive levels' compared to the Group companies. In a new report, the global brokerage said that the ports-to-power conglomerate will also be able to withstand recent turmoil brought on by allegations in an indictment by the US Department of Justice (DoJ). "Adani complex looks most attractive among other IG (investment grade) corporates from India. Other Indian IG corporates stay at expensive levels vis a vis Adani complex," the note read.

Nomura further commented that compared with the Adani-Hindenburg episode in early 2023, "Adani Group's liquidity management awareness has improved meaningfully and should be able to weather the rainstorm with adequate short-term liquidity position."

Nomura added that overall, no signs of stress are seen across the Adani Group and its fundamentals/asset quality remain intact. "We believe the group should be able to weather this round of rainstorm," said the financial research firm. As far as global banks halting their financial support to Adani com-

panies is concerned, Nomura expects that it will not be a problem when the matter regarding DoJ allegations settles down.

"Separately, the big three Japanese banks plan to continue their relationship with Adani group." The DoJ indictment is only an allegation, Nomura said, citing Adani Management. The allegation does not constitute any breach in anti-corruption covenants. It could indicate a breach if found guilty. Nomura did caution that "global banks might halt new financings in the short-term but should gradually resume in the long-term when the dust of the Adani-DoJ saga settles."

"Separately, the Big Three Japanese banks plan to continue their relationship with Adani Group," it added. The Big Three Japanese banks refer to MUFG, SMBC and Mizuho.

Nomura expects upside on bond prices for Adani Green Energy Ltd., Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd., Adani International Container Terminal, Adani Electricity Mumbai Ltd., Adani T-One Transmission Ltd., and Adani Renewable Energy Ltd. For Adani Green Energy, the prices may go up to 7 points, for others it sees 2 to 4 points, said the report.