

THE COMSOC GAZETTE



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FINANCE AND INVESTMENT
STOCK MARKET
STARTUPS
ECONOMY
GEOPOLITICS
SCIENCE AND TECH
COMSOG GENIE

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FINANCIAL FORESIGHTS

01 REVOLUTIONARY REMITTANCE - E-RUPEE TO SLASH CROSS-BORDER TRANSFER COSTS

The Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) is a digital token representing legal tender issued in the same denominations as paper currency and coins. The introduction of CBDC was announced in the Union Budget 2022-23 by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

Traditionally, the process of sending money internationally has been burdened by high fees, but the e-rupee aims to change that narrative. The innovative digital currency is expected to bring down the cost of cross-border transactions to just 2-3%, making it a game-changer for individuals and businesses. "At the moment, cross-border payment is not a very efficient system, it takes time. At the same time, there is cost factor," Ajay Seth (Finance Ministry) said. Giving data, he said remittances to India are around USD 100 billion annually and compared to the global level of 8-9 per cent, the cost in India is low at 5 per cent of each transaction value. The e-rupee is paving the way for a revolution in cross-border remittances, making the world a more interconnected and economically vibrant place.

02 INDIA HYDROGEN ALLIANCE GROWS WITH NEW INDUSTRY MEMBERS

The India H2 Alliance is an industry coalition of global and Indian companies committed to the creation of a hydrogen value-chain and economy in India.

The Indian H2 Alliance has expanded its membership with seven new industry members Torrent Power, Synergen Projects, Godawari

Power and Ispat, Technip Energies, HSBC Bank, Bureau Veritas and Newtrace joining the IH2A industry coalition, according to a statement. The expanded membership announcement follows the submission of the USD 5 billion National Green Hydrogen Hub Economic Viability and Development Plan, and the USD 50 billion Hydrogen Equipment and Exports Report, submitted by the India Hydrogen Alliance (IH2A), to the Government of India. The expansion of the India Hydrogen Alliance aligns with the government's commitment to promoting sustainable energy solutions.

03 INFLATION ACCELERATES: INDIA'S NOVEMBER SURPRISE WITH A 5.5% SURGE IN RETAIL PRICES

In the December policy meeting, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) left the inflation aim unchanged at 5.4 per cent India's retail inflation surged 5.55 per cent in November on an annual basis as against a four-month low of 4.87 per cent in October, as per the data released by the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation. The finance minister said retail inflation in India has been mostly within acceptable limits (between 2%-6%) after the notification of the inflation tolerance band in 2016. There has been broad-based easing in core inflation, which is indicative of successful disinflation through monetary policy actions. The near-term outlook however is masked by risks to food inflation, which might lead to an inflation uptick in November and possibly in December. The trajectory of food inflation needs to be close-monitored," RBI Governor and Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) chief Shaktikanta Das had said while announcing the policy decisions.

01 INDIA OVERTAKES HONGKONG TO BECOME THE SEVENTH LARGEST MARKET:

India's stock market value has overtaken Hong Kong's to become the seventh largest in the world as optimism about the country's economic prospects grows.

As of the end of November, the total market capitalization of the National Stock Exchange of India was \$3.989 trillion versus Hong Kong's \$3.984 trillion, according to data from the World Federation of Exchanges. India has been a standout market this year in the Asia-Pacific region. Increased liquidity, more domestic participation and improving dynamics in the global macro environment in the form of falling U.S. HSBC said banks, health care and energy are the best positioned sectors for next year. Sectors such as autos, retailers, real estate and telecoms are also relatively well positioned for 2024, while fast-moving consumer goods, utilities and chemicals are among those HSBC categorised as unfavorable. Hong Kong's Hang Seng index is poised to notch a fourth year of declines and is the worst performer among major Asia-Pacific equity markets.

02 THE YELLOW METAL NURSING A SHARP FALL

The yellow metal, GOLD, nursing a sharp fall away from record highs as markets hunkered down before key U.S. inflation data, as well as a Federal Reserve interest rate decision.

Gold lost the coveted \$2,000 an ounce level this week as markets second-guessed bets that the Fed

will cut interest rates by as soon as March 2024. These bets had briefly driven gold to record highs of over \$2,100 an ounce earlier this month. Markets were now squarely focused on U.S. consumer price index (CPI) inflation data. While the reading is expected to show that inflation eased slightly in November, it is still expected to remain well above the Fed's 2% annual target.

03 TATA POWER AND INDIAN OIL COLLABORATE FOR NATIONWIDE EV CHARGING NETWORK

Tata Power EV Charging Solutions Limited, a key player in the EV charging sector has joined forces with Indian Oil Corporation Limited through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to deploy **fast and ultra-fast electric vehicle charging points** throughout India. Under this collaboration, Tata Power aims to install over 500 EV charging points at various IOCL retail outlets in major cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Ahmedabad, Pune, and Kochi, as well as along major highways, including the Mumbai-Pune Expressway and the Golden Quadrilateral.

Tata Power has established itself as a leader in the EV charging domain, boasting nearly 60% market share and an expansive nationwide network covering over 420 cities. This network, comprising home chargers, public charging points, and bus charging stations, underscores Tata Power's unwavering commitment to enhancing EV charging accessibility across the nation.

01 **SPACE X ROCKETS TO NEW HEIGHTS: VALUED AT \$180 BILLION:AMIDST SECONDARY MARKET BUZZ**

SpaceX, the space exploration company helmed by billionaire Elon Musk, is reportedly exploring a substantial valuation exceeding \$180 billion in a planned secondary market share sale. Ongoing discussions target a tender offer ranging from \$500 million to \$750 million, with insiders contemplating a share price of approximately \$95 each.

This valuation surge represents a substantial leap from SpaceX's \$150 billion valuation earlier this summer during a tender offer. Should this materialise, SpaceX would ascend to the echelons of the world's top 75 companies by market capitalization, rubbing shoulders with industry giants such as T-Mobile USA Inc. (\$179 billion), Nike Inc. (\$177 billion), and China Mobile (\$176 billion). Headquartered in Hawthorne, California, SpaceX commands a dominant position in the commercial space launch services market, driven by its formidable Falcon rockets. The company's diverse missions span private-sector clients, governmental agencies like NASA, and other entities. SpaceX's Starlink venture, an internet service powered by satellites in low-Earth orbit, further diversifies and fortifies its revenue streams. Forecasts project SpaceX's estimated revenue for this year at around \$9 billion, propelled by its rocket launches and Starlink initiatives. Anticipated sales are set to surge to approximately \$15 billion by 2024, signalling an impressive trajectory of growth.

In strategic moves, discussions revolve around a potential initial public offering (IPO) for Starlink in late 2024, capitalising on the burgeoning demand for space-based communication services. With a \$180 billion valuation, SpaceX firmly secures its place as the world's second most valuable startup, trailing only behind ByteDance, the parent company of TikTok.

02 **ADANI GOES GREEN: \$100 BILLION GAMBLE ON A RENEWABLE FUTURE**

The Adani Group, led by billionaire Gautam Adani, has committed to investing \$100 billion in the green energy transition over the next decade. The conglomerate, comprising Adani Green Energy, Adani Energy Solutions, Adani Ports & SEZ, ACC, and Ambuja Cements, aims to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 and has pledged to plant 100 million trees by 2030. Emphasising decarbonization efforts, the group's businesses are adopting renewable energy, electrifying operations, utilising biofuels, and implementing waste heat recovery and energy storage technologies. Adani Electricity Mumbai, a subsidiary, has increased its renewable energy portion to 38.3%. Adani Green Energy achieved zero waste to landfill and net water positivity at sites with a capacity of 200 MW or more. Adani Ports & SEZ achieved a 15% share of renewables and reduced energy and water consumption intensity. Adani Enterprises is constructing gigafactories for 10 GW solar panels, 10 GW wind turbines, and 5 GW hydrogen electrolyzers. The company is also developing Asia's first green hydrogen-powered mining trucks in collaboration with Ashok Leyland and Ballard Power.

01 ARGENTINA IN A TIGHT SPOT

Argentina on Tuesday announced a sharp devaluation of its currency and cuts to energy and transportation subsidies as part of shock measures. New President Javier Milei says that drastic measures are needed to deal with an economic “emergency.”

Economy Minister Luis Caputo said in a televised message the Argentine peso will be devalued by 50% to 800 to the U.S. dollar from 400 pesos to the dollar. Argentina is suffering 143% annual inflation, its currency has plunged and four in 10 Argentines are impoverished. The nation has also a yawning fiscal deficit, a trade deficit of \$43 billion, plus a daunting \$45 billion debt to the International Monetary Fund, with \$10.6 billion due to the multilateral and private creditors by April.

As part of the new measures, Caputo said the government is canceling tenders of any public works projects and cutting some state jobs to reduce the size of the government.

02 CENTRE MAY SAVE RS. 30,000 CRORE AS STATES FALTER

The Centre is expecting savings of at least Rs 30,000 crore from its budgeted Rs 1.3 lakh crore assistance to states for capital expenditure in 2023-24, as the states have faltered in using the sanctioned amount, said people with knowledge of the matter. The Centre has released Rs 60,104 crore under the Special Assistance to States for Capital Expenditure scheme in this financial year, of the sanctioned amount of about Rs 1 lakh crore so far. The amount is less than half of that allocated for this fiscal, as states including Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Punjab, and Manipur have failed to meet certain eligibility criteria under the scheme, while Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh have yet to exhaust the first installment. Any unspent amount, on top of improved tax collection, would help the Centre meet or trim its fiscal deficit from the 2023-24 target of 5.9% of gross domestic product (GDP), especially when the nominal growth is estimated to be lower than the budgeted goal of 10.8%.

03 EGYPT IS READY TO BE INDIA'S GATEWAY TO EUROPE, AFRICA AND WEST ASIA

India and Egypt's strategic partnership has been elevated to a new level with PM Narendra Modi and President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi meeting thrice this year. Besides strengthening its defence partnership Egypt has offered India special support for enhancing investments across sectors.

Egypt is located at the crossroads of Africa, Asia, and Europe. This gives it a strategic location for trade and investment. The Suez Canal, which is one of the world's busiest shipping routes, is located in Egypt. This provides foreign investors with access to a large market of consumers and businesses in the MENA region, Europe, and Asia, let alone its central time zone which makes it accessible to all countries, said Hossam Heiba, CEO, GAFI.

THE GLOBAL CHESSBOARD

01 MILITANT ATTACK CLAIMS LIVES IN CENTRAL BALI: SOLDIERS AND CIVILIANS AMONG VICTIMS

In a deadly attack in central Mali, militants targeted a village and military camp, resulting in around two dozen soldiers and at least five civilians killed. The assailants seized and destroyed the military camp, with reports of some male residents being kidnapped and others killed. The incident occurred in a rural commune in the Segou Region, contributing to the ongoing jihadist insurgency in Mali and neighbouring West African countries. Mali has been grappling with violence since 2012 when militants exploited a Tuareg rebellion. The Sahel region, south of the Sahara, continues to face the spread of jihadist violence linked to groups like al Qaeda and Islamic State, where thousands have been slaughtered and displaced from their homes and families.

02 EU FACES SHOWDOWN WITH HUNGARY OVER UKRAINE AID AND MEMBERSHIP TALKS

The European Union faces a critical summit to decide on key proposals for aiding Ukraine, with Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orban threatening to veto the aid and enlargement talks. The EU leaders' meeting on December 14-15 aims to grant 50 billion euros in economic support to Kyiv, allocate an additional 20 billion euros to Ukraine's military, and initiate accession talks. Securing EU assistance is crucial for Ukraine, given uncertainties about future U.S. support.

Orban, known for his ties with Russian President Putin, has previously diluted sanctions against Russia and opposed aid to Ukraine, citing concerns about democratic backsliding and corruption. Hungary's veto could also impact EU support for Georgia and Bosnia. The summit's outcome remains uncertain, with potential compromises, including delaying negotiations with Ukraine until March, and challenges regarding Germany's constitutional court ruling and the EU's military aid plans.

03 INTERNAL TENSIONS EMERGE IN CHINA OVER HUKOU REFORM

The Chinese government is reportedly facing internal tensions over the reform of its hukou system, an internal passport system that links individuals' access to services and opportunities to their birthplace. While authorities have recently indicated a willingness to relax restrictions, progress appears to be stalling. The Ministry of Public Security called for abolishing hukou in smaller cities, but larger cities face challenges in terms of limited residential supply, pollution, and congestion. While there is acknowledgment of the economic rationale for reform, concerns about social stability and the financial burden on indebted cities are hindering decisive moves. The hukou system has significant implications for rural migrants' access to public services and influences household consumption patterns. Reform may be considered on a city-by-city basis, with potential obstacles in the process.

01 APPLE SETS 50 MILLION IPHONES TARGET UNDER 'MAKE IN INDIA'

Amid the tensions between Washington and China, Apple plans an escape. It plans to move away some of its manufacturing from China and India is the vessel it has found fit. A report claims that Apple is planning to produce 50 million iPhones in India annually and it plans to reach this number in the following two to three years. Foxconn and Apple have been engaged in a significant partnership with India and the same is reflected by a recent security filing suggesting that the Taiwan based Apple supplier is set to invest 1.5 billion dollars in India for "operational needs". Moreover, Tata Group is planning to build a manufacturing plant to manufacture iPhones. This facility will have 50,000 workers on about 20 assembly lines and it is expected to be operational in the next 12 to 18 months. If Apple's plans are achieved, India would account for a quarter of global iPhone production and would align perfectly with India's ambition to become a major hub for electronics manufacturing.

02 GANGAYAAN: FEMALE ROBOT VYOMMITRA TO SPACE BEFORE AUSTRONAUTS

Isro's ambitious Gaganyaan project is set to demonstrate India's capability in human spaceflight. However, science and technology minister Dr Jitendra announced that India in the following year will launch Vyommitra, a female robot astronaut, to space ahead of the manned mission.

The Union Minister pointed out that space technology in India is not just about exploration but also about practical applications that touch everyday lives. It plays a crucial role in various sectors, including disaster management, infrastructure development, agriculture, telemedicine, and robotic surgery. In a nod to gender inclusivity in the space sector, Dr. Singh acknowledged the leadership roles women are now taking on in major space projects, such as the Aditya L1 Mission and Chandrayaan-3.

03 DISCOVERY OF A RARE SYSTEM WITH 6 PLANETS ORBITING IN SYNC

In a recent astronomical discovery, a team of researchers identified a rare and fascinating planetary phenomenon in the nearby star system HD110067, located approximately 100 light-years away in the Coma Berenices constellation. Detected by NASA's TESS and ESA's Cheops satellites, six planets were observed in a unique gravitational configuration known as resonance. Specifically, the four inner planets exhibit a 3/2 resonance, indicating that the closest planet completes three orbits for every two orbits of the next one. The two outermost planets demonstrate a 4/3 resonance pattern, with one completing four orbits for every three of the outermost planets. Such orbitally resonant systems provide valuable insights into the formation and evolution of planetary systems. While many planets form in resonance, external factors like massive planets, passing stars, or significant impacts can disrupt this delicate balance, highlighting the significance of this rare discovery.

MOVIE RECOMMENDATION

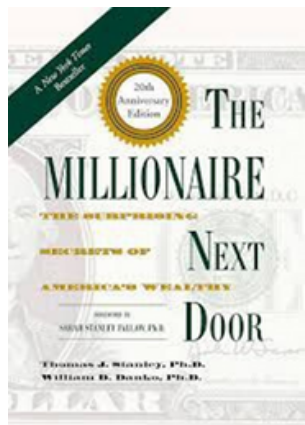
JERRY MAGUIRE

When slick sports agent Jerry Maguire has a crisis of conscience, he pens a heartfelt company-wide memo that promptly gets him fired. Desperate to hang on to the athletes that he represents, Jerry starts his own management firm, with only single mother Dorothy Boyd joining him in his new venture. Banking on their sole client, football player Rod Tidwell, Jerry and Dorothy struggle to make their business work.



BOOK RECOMMENDATION

THE MILLIONAIRE NEXT DOOR



There must be hardly any person who is not interested in getting rich. We all want to know that one secret that all the rich seem to share. In "The Millionaire Next Door" authors Thomas Stanley & William D. Danko examine the common characteristics of millionaires, debunk the myths associated with millionaires and provide a detailed perspective of what a real millionaire looks like. Using real-life data and examples, the book analyses the habits of the wealthy and wheedles out their common attributes, practices and ways of life.

The book makes for an interesting read and sheds perspective on the lives of millionaires.

PODCAST RECOMMENDATION

WOMEN AND MONEY

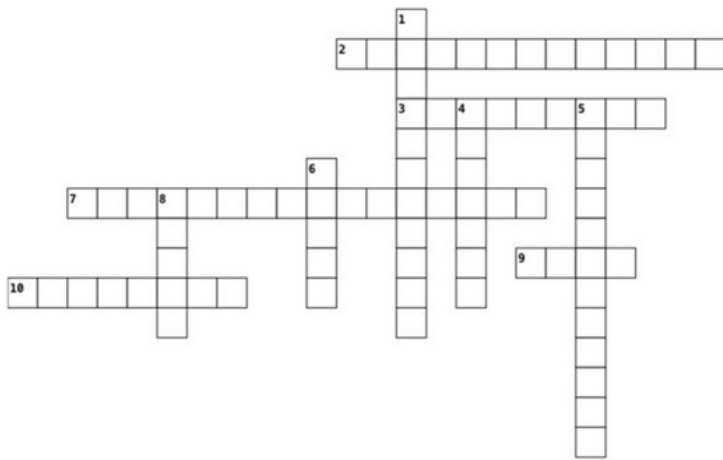
Suze Orman's Women & Money podcast, hosted by the renowned financial expert, addresses and empowers women of all ages and the discerning men who choose to listen. Each episode provides an opportunity to embrace control over one's destiny, tapping into Suze's distinctive wisdom and acknowledging that, for women, money is not the ultimate objective but a tool for a rich and purposeful life. Suze shares personal anecdotes and profound financial insights, drawing on 35 years of experience in guiding millions worldwide toward wealth creation.



STOCK PICKS

Established in 1995, PVR INOX Ltd. is a notable Mid Cap company within the Media & Entertainment sector, boasting a market capitalization of Rs 16,966.44 Crore. The company's diverse revenue streams encompass segments such as Income From Films, Beverages & Food, Income From Advertisement, and Income from Films Production & Distribution. In the quarter concluding on September 30, 2023, PVR INOX Ltd. reported a Consolidated Total Income of Rs 2,023.70 Crore, marking a significant 52.18% increase from the preceding quarter's Total Income of Rs 1,329.80 Crore and an impressive 187.81% surge from the corresponding quarter of the previous year, which reported a Total Income of Rs 703.13 Crore. Notably, the company achieved a net profit after tax of Rs 166.20 Crore in the most recent quarter.

CROSSWORD



ACROSS

2. A marketplace where buyers and sellers trade shares of publicly listed companies
3. The total value of a company's outstanding shares of stock, often used to determine its market capitalization.
7. The interest rate at which a central bank lends money to commercial banks, influencing overall economic activity.
9. This financial instrument represents a loan made by an investor to a borrower, typically a corporation or government.
10. a roll of currency notes (often taken as the resources of a person or business etc.)



DOWN

1. the purest and most basic form of corporate ownership
4. Paid to copyright owner
5. A financial metric that measures a company's ability to cover its short-term obligations with its short-term assets.
6. Verification of a company's accounts
8. Bestow with resources or gifts, often for a lasting impact.

ANSWER IN THE NEXT EDITION

Answers of the previous edition

Across

2. Deficit
4. Capitalism
6. Consumer
8. Price
10. Market

Down

1. Return on investment (ROI)
3. Inflation
5. Matching principles
7. Profit or Return
9. M2

VOCABULARY

Ubiquitous: Existing or being everywhere, especially at the same time.

Cacophony: A harsh, discordant mixture of sounds.

Ephemeral: Lasting for a very short time, fleeting.

Serendipity: The occurrence of events by chance in a happy or beneficial way.

Euphemism: A mild or indirect word or expression substituted for one considered to be too harsh or blunt when referring to something unpleasant or embarrassing.

JARGONS DECODED

Amortisation

The gradual reduction in the value of an asset (or a debt) over time. A debt (such as a mortgage) is amortised via regular repayments.

Arbitrage

The practice of exploiting price differentials in different markets; for example, buying an asset cheaply in London and selling it for a higher price in New York.

EBITDA

An acronym standing for Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation, and Amortization, EBITDA is a commonly used measure of a company's ability to generate cash flow.

Asset stripping

The practice of buying a company and rapidly selling off the component parts with the aim of making a profit.

Laissez-faire

This French term refers to the idea that governments should leave the economy alone as much as possible, and should allow free trade.

MYTH BUSTERS

More Products or Services Equal More Success

While diversification can be beneficial, the myth that flooding the market with a multitude of products or services guarantees success is misleading. Quality often trumps quantity. Focusing on a core set of high-quality offerings that address specific customer needs can lead to more significant success than spreading resources too thin. Successful businesses often excel in delivering a few exceptional products or services rather than trying to be all things to all people. Strategic focus and excellence in execution can be more potent tools for success than a wide array of offerings.

Failure Equals the End of Your Entrepreneurial Journey

The fear of failure can be paralyzing for aspiring entrepreneurs. However, the reality is that many successful business leaders have faced setbacks along the way. Failure is not the end; it's a stepping stone to growth and learning. Embracing failure as a part of the entrepreneurial journey allows individuals to adapt, learn from mistakes, and come back stronger. Many successful entrepreneurs have faced and overcome failures, using them as valuable lessons that ultimately contribute to their achievements. So, remember, failure is not the end but a crucial part of the path to success.

FORTUNE'S FABLES

PATAGONIA: THE ANTI-BRAND BRAND

In a world obsessed with consumerism, Patagonia stands out as a brand that actively discourages its customers from buying more than they need.

Instead of focusing on the latest trends or seasonal collections, Patagonia emphasizes durability and timelessness. Their products are designed to last for years, with a focus on functionality and repair. They even have a repair program that helps customers extend the life of their clothes. They even ran a full-page ad in The New York Times on Black Friday, urging people to "Don't Buy This Jacket."

This anti-consumerist message has resonated with many consumers, especially millennials who are increasingly concerned about the environmental impact of their purchases. Patagonia has become a symbol of conscious consumerism.

“The real test is not whether you avoid this failure, because you won't. It's whether you let it harden or shame you into inaction, or whether you learn from it; whether you choose to persevere.” -Barack Obama

Thank you for reading!

**Hope you enjoyed the content.
Stay tuned for the next edition!**

