

AIMER 
view



Happy New Year



EDITION 12

START-UPS FROM MALABAR SCALING GREAT HEIGHTS

In a recent development, the edutech start-up INTERVAL, based in Areekode, Malappuram, secured a spot in the prestigious 'Talent Boost project initiated by the Ministry of Economic Affairs of Finland. This distinction marks INTERVAL as the first and only Indian company to receive such an invitation, further underscoring the thriving start-up ecosystem in Malabar. The selection took place at the global tech gathering 'Experience Tampere,' held in Finland's city of Tampere, renowned for having the finest start-up ecosystem in all of Europe.

Another noteworthy success comes from OPEN Financial Technologies, which entered the coveted Unicorn club a few months ago. Founded by Aneesh Achuthan, who hails from Perithalmanna in Malappuram district, OPEN is the first Unicorn from Kerala and the 100th from India. Supported by the Kerala Start-up Mission (KSUM), OPEN's achievement adds to the growing list of start-ups from the region making significant strides.

It is heartening to witness start-ups from our neighborhood gaining global recognition. They are following a proven path: gaining market traction, increasing valuation, securing funding, and joining the Unicorn Club. OPEN's trajectory positions it to potentially become a decacorn, centicorn, hectocorn, and so on. This success story sets an inspiring example for other companies to emulate.

However, while this growth track is commendable, it prompts the question: is it the best track for sustainable growth and societal value creation? Achieving Unicorn status, denoting a privately held start-up with a valuation of USD 1 billion, is undoubtedly prestigious. Yet, the valuation is often based on investor sentiment rather than a guarantee of strong financial performance or return on investment (ROI).

Recent events, such as the bankruptcy filing of once-prominent unicorns like WeWork, OliveAI, and Veev, highlight the risks associated with this model. In 2023, over 3,200 VC-backed US tech companies faced bankruptcy, signaling a potential downturn in the market. The collapse of these companies affects not only promoters and investors but also the common man, whose investments indirectly contribute to venture capital funds.

Is there a safer alternative to multiple rounds of private funding? The answer is a resounding yes in favor of the IPO route. During the early days of venture capital funding, companies often went public through Initial Public Offers (IPOs) within approximately four years of initial funding from VCs. However, a recent Harvard-sponsored study

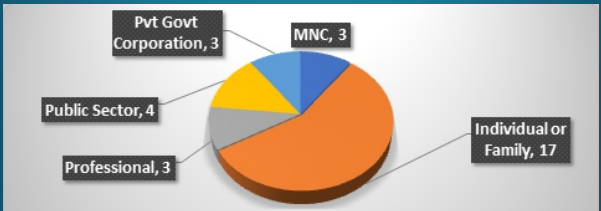
revealed a decline in the number of VC-funded companies opting for IPOs, with the average time span increasing to over 11 years.

This shift is attributed to factors such as increased private capital availability, more favorable government policies for VC funding, and the perceived high risk of devaluation once a company goes public. While these factors play a role, it is essential to consider the wisdom of adopting the time-tested IPO route, ensuring sustained growth and preventing the pitfalls observed in the unicorn model.

One deterrent for young entrepreneurs considering the IPO route is the lack of a home ground advantage. Unlike established markets, India, and specifically Kerala, lack a large investor public. To create a supportive home ground, more companies from the region should consider going public. Currently, only a handful of publicly listed companies exist in Malabar, and efforts by private individuals, government entities, and professionals are necessary to encourage more listings.

Examining the BSE30 as a sample, it's evident that 55% of companies are founded by private individuals or families, emphasizing the need for collaboration between private, government, and professional sectors to increase public listings. These companies should leverage advisory services to raise awareness and encourage participation in the stock market. Unlike other investment instruments, stock market investors wield significant power through voting rights and participation in Annual General Meetings, empowering them to contribute actively to company decisions.

Creating a home advantage for start-ups through increased public listings will pave the way for more companies to consider the IPO route. This strategic shift not only positions start-ups for greater heights but also ensures widespread prosperity for the entire nation.



HARI KUMAR M

Chief Business Officer,
AIMER Business School

TOP NEWS ROUNDUP



Ernst & Young India Report Forecasts Gen AI's \$1.2-1.5 Trillion Boost to India's GDP by FY29-30

An Ernst & Young India report highlights Generative AI's potential to add \$1.2-1.5 trillion to India's GDP over seven years. Sectors like business services, finance, education, retail, and healthcare are expected to drive nearly 69% of this growth, with a projected 5.9-7.2% increase in GDP by FY29-30.



Survey Reveals Startup Employees Hold Jobs Longer as Tech Salaries Cool

According to a survey by VC firm Elevation Capital, 46% of startup founders reported improved employee retention, with fewer departures. Additionally, 50% noted that hiring for tech positions has become easier due to a cooling trend in tech salaries compared to the previous year.



S&P Predicts India as Third Largest Economy, Forecasts Robust Growth

S&P's report anticipates India becoming the world's third-largest economy, foreseeing a 7% growth in 2026 and revising the current fiscal year's GDP rate to 6.4%. Projections suggest India's GDP will surpass Japan and Germany by 2030, aligning with Niti Aayog's vision of a \$30 trillion developed economy by 2047.

THE STORY OF RITESH AGARWAL

In the world of entrepreneurship, success often comes to those who dare to take unconventional paths. Ritesh Agarwal, the visionary mind behind OYO Rooms, exemplifies this spirit. Starting in 2013, Ritesh fearlessly embarked on a journey that has not only redefined affordable housing but has also propelled him to become the second-youngest billionaire globally.

Ritesh's story is unconventional from the start. Forgoing the traditional college route, he left the Indian School of Business and Finance before completing his studies. However, this deviation from the norm did not hinder his success. Instead, Ritesh's focus on the future and dedication to his vision for affordable housing became the driving force behind OYO's meteoric rise.

OYO Rooms, now the largest budget hotel chain in India, was founded in 2012 with a mission to provide straightforward, reliable lodging options. Ritesh's commitment to offering affordable housing regardless of location has transformed the Indian hospitality sector. Today, OYO collaborates with over 4,200 hotels across 170 cities, reserving up to a million room nights each month.

Despite being just 27 years old, Ritesh has proven that age is no barrier to success. OYO's value is anticipated to surpass \$1.1 billion by 2020, a testament to the impact of Ritesh's innovative approach and unwavering dedication. His story serves as an inspiration to aspiring entrepreneurs, proving that taking chances and prioritizing one's vision can lead to extraordinary achievements.



SHIFIN AHAMED

UG Student,

AIMER Business School

DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP SKILLS

The world we live in is constantly evolving, driven by rapid technological advancements and the emergence of new industries. Yet, the education system in India, particularly in non-medical fields, has remained largely unchanged for over a century. This disconnect between education and the demands of the modern world has resulted in a generation of graduates with a plethora of degrees but a dearth of practical skills and competencies.

The lack of hands-on experience in India's educational landscape is a significant contributor to this skills gap. Unlike medical colleges, where internships are an integral part of the curriculum, most other fields lack such practical exposure. Students are often confined to theoretical concepts, leaving them ill-equipped to apply their knowledge in real-world scenarios. This disconnect between theory and practice has led to a situation where graduates struggle to find employment despite holding multiple degrees.

The consequences of this outdated education system are far-reaching. India faces a double whammy of low-quality education and limited job opportunities, forcing many talented students to seek higher education abroad. Statistics reveal that approximately 8 lakh students leave India annually for higher studies, highlighting the growing disillusionment with the domestic education system.

As educators, we bear the responsibility of finding solutions to this pressing issue. The first step towards modernization lies in aligning educational courses with industry needs. We must move away from the traditional lecture-based approach and embrace experiential learning, incorporating internships, guest lectures from industry experts, and real-world projects into the curriculum.

Furthermore, individualized attention is crucial for nurturing well-rounded individuals. Educators must closely monitor each student's progress, identifying areas of weakness and providing tailored guidance to enhance their skills and competencies. Hands-on learning activities and mini-projects provide students with opportunities to apply their knowledge in practical settings, fostering a deeper understanding of the subject matter.

In a world that is constantly evolving, education cannot afford to remain static. If India's education system fails to adapt to the changing demands of the modern world, it will struggle to produce graduates who can contribute meaningfully to the nation's progress. Let us work together to build a better and more quality-oriented education system, empowering the next generation to thrive in a rapidly evolving world.



VAHEEDALI

Associate Professor,
AIMER Business School



AIMER ROUND-UPS



Malabar Gold: M.P. Ahammed's Entrepreneurial Vision Spurs Growth

Malabar Gold: Entrepreneur M.P. Ahammed's vision birthed Malabar Gold in 1993, a jewelry trading firm that evolved into the Malabar Group. A vibrant corporate ambiance and employee happiness defined the industry visit, showcasing the company's growth under Ahammed's leadership, and maintaining core values amid business expansion.



IEP Initiative: PG Students Sharpen Skills Through Simulated Interviews

IEP Initiative: PG students honed interview skills through a simulated interview under the Individual Education Plan. The mock sessions, resembling real job interviews, equipped students with practice, enabling them to exhibit strengths, receive constructive feedback, and enhance communication and presentation abilities for future job prospects.



Placement Drive: PG Students Interface with Leading Companies for Career Prospects

Placement Drive: PG students engaged with companies like VKC, PEPP Learning, and Wexo during a placement drive. Excitement filled the air as students interacted with representatives, exploring potential career avenues. The event offered hope and opportunities for students to step closer to their envisioned professions amidst an atmosphere buzzing with anticipation.



AIMER ROUND-UPS

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS



Sahala Sulaiman KK

"My journey with Football Creatives wasn't merely a job; it marked a pivotal chapter in my pursuit of success. While coordinating on-field programs, I honed my skills and orchestrated impactful events such as Gokulam FC Day and the South India freestyles meetup. These experiences solidified my talents in organization and leadership, leaving a lasting impact on both myself and the community."



Rubeena MK

"Gokulam Day and Beyond: My internship at Football Creatives served as more than just a learning experience; it became a launchpad for my growth. Beyond refining my coordination and attention to detail, I played a crucial role in data collection, spearheading major events like Gokulam Day and nurturing valuable relationships with stakeholders. This internship showcased my prowess in event management and stakeholder engagement, equipping me with the skills and confidence to excel in the dynamic realm of sports marketing."



Rinsha E

"Inspiring the Next Generation: Forging connections between Football Creatives Ltd., Anwar School, and Ace Public School was an exhilarating journey. The success of our joint school clinic initiative wouldn't have been possible without the collaboration and dedication of everyone involved. Participation in community events and stakeholder meetings further fortified our bonds and paved the way for lasting partnerships, continuing to inspire kids to embrace the world of sports."

QUIZ TIME

One winner will get free gifts & a mention in the next edition

Which of the following is the oldest stock exchange in India?

- (a) Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE)
- (b) National Stock Exchange (NSE)
- (c) Calcutta Stock Exchange (CSE)
- (d) Madras Stock Exchange (MSE)



REPLY YOUR ANSWER(S)
IN THE WHATSAPP CHAT
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* Correct answer will be in the next edition.

Last edition's answer is 'c. Mira Murati'



Last Edition's
Quiz Winner!

**Muhammad Firos, Kollam
Student**



COMPANY WATCH

UNLEASHING INFINITE POSSIBILITIES WITH TOPGROW BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

TopGrow Business Solutions, a subsidiary of Dimois Group of Companies, is a trailblazer in the business cosmos, dedicated to propelling enterprises into the future through cutting-edge digital and real-world marketing solutions. With a cadre of visionary specialists, we offer an all-encompassing suite of services, poised to exceed your expectations.



Our forte lies in Marketing Analytics and Strategy Services, where data-driven decisions take center stage. Through insightful analytics, strategic consultation, and industry training, we empower businesses to craft robust brand strategies and ensure teams stay abreast of the latest trends.

At TopGrow, efficiency and effectiveness define our approach. Market Research, Predictive Analytics, Customer Segmentation, and Competitive Analysis are just a glimpse into how we optimize resources and channel allocation for maximum impact.

In the digital sphere, our prowess shines through our Digital Marketing Services. From SEO to social media campaigns and conversion-driven websites, we ensure your brand maintains a commanding online presence. Continuous adaptation to digital trends keeps your business at the forefront of the digital marketing game.

However, our expertise isn't confined to the digital landscape alone. With our Offline Marketing Services, we bring traditional strategies to the fore. Product Branding, Print Advertising, Event Marketing, and Public Relations showcase our commitment to time-tested techniques that make your brand stand out in the real world.

Moreover, our commitment extends beyond services. TopGrow's Marketing Training Programs equip individuals and organizations with essential skills in market research, digital marketing, branding, and more, fostering expertise in an ever-evolving marketing landscape.

Choosing TopGrow signifies embracing a company dedicated to service excellence across digital, offline, and strategic domains. We're steadfast in helping your business flourish and carve its niche in today's competitive marketplace. Embrace infinite possibilities with TopGrow and elevate your business to unprecedented heights.

Visit www.thetopgrow.com to explore how we can transform your business narrative.

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