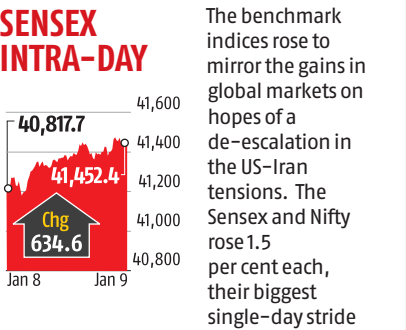


## INDICES SURGE, OIL DROPS ON EASING US–IRAN TENSIONS



The benchmark indices rose to mirror the gains in global markets on hopes of a de-escalation in the US–Iran tensions. The Sensex and Nifty rose 1.5 per cent each, their biggest single-day stride since October 23, 2019. The Sensex rose 635 points to end at 41,452, while the Nifty surged 191 points to close at 12,216. The biggest gainers were ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, IndusInd Bank, and Mahindra & Mahindra.

## House of Commons approves Brexit Bill

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Brexit legislation cleared its final hurdle in the House of Commons, putting an end to the parliamentary gridlock that cost his predecessor Theresa May her job. Members of Parliament voted 330 to 231 in favour of the Withdrawal Agreement Bill, which now passes to the House of Lords. Johnson wants the measures passed into law before the end of the month so the UK can leave the European Union on January 31.

### COMPANIES P3

## Will not face insolvency, says Reliance Infra

Anil Ambani-led Reliance Infrastructure (RInfra) will not undergo insolvency proceedings as it is looking to pay its lenders in the next few weeks, said a company executive. RInfra is likely to complete the sale of its Delhi–Agra toll road by January–end and its proceeds will be used for debt repayment, the executive added. “RInfra has received in-principle approval for harmonious substitution in the Delhi–Agra toll road project on January 7 from the NHAI.



## PERSONAL FINANCE: Keep an eye on capital protection 16

Use these smart strategies to ensure decent returns from equity investing, writes SARBAJEET K SEN

# Byju's overtakes Ola as third-largest unicorn

Firm valued at \$8 bn after Tiger Global's \$200–mn funding

BIBHU NANJAN MISHRA  
Bengaluru, 9 January

Education technology company Byju's is learnt to have raised \$200 million in a funding round from Tiger Global Management, which has valued the Bengaluru-based start-up at around \$8 billion, making it the third-largest unicorn (start-up valued over \$1 billion) in the country. With this, the Byju Raveendran-founded company has seen over 50 per cent jump in its valuation in just around nine months. In March 2019, Byju's was valued \$5.4 billion, when it raised around \$31 million from General Atlantic, and Chinese investment giant Tencent.

At the current valuation, Byju's has now replaced home-grown cab-hailing major Ola as the third-largest unicorn, next only to Paytm and OYO, which are valued around \$16 billion and \$10 billion, respectively.

Byju's confirmed the transaction through a press statement, though the company declined to share any specific details of the deal. Tiger Global could not be immediately reached for its comments.

“We are happy to partner with a strong investor like Tiger Global Management. They share our sense of purpose and this partnership will advance our long-term vision of creating an impact by changing the way students learn,” said Raveendran. “This partnership is both a validation of the impact created by us so far and a vote of confidence for our long-term vision.”

This is Tiger Global's first investment in the edutech space in India after Vendantu, an online tutoring platform, where it, along with WestBridge Capital, led a \$42-million round in August.

An early backer of India's internet growth story, the New York-headquartered Tiger Global has been a prolific investor in the Indian

# Fundamentals are strong, economy will rebound: PM

Economists ask Modi to restore data credibility, provide stimulus



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah at a pre-Budget meeting with economists and experts at the NITI Aayog on Thursday. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman was not present because she was holding meetings with party workers at BJP headquarters

ARUP ROYCHOUDHURY & ABHISHEK WAGHMARE  
New Delhi, 9 January

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Thursday that the fundamentals of the Indian economy were strong, it had the capacity to bounce back, and the Centre was expecting an economic revival in the coming quarters.

At a pre-Budget meeting, organised by the NITI Aayog, with economists, business leaders, entrepreneurs, and sectoral experts, Modi said: “The strong absorbent capacity of the Indian economy shows the strength of basic fundamentals of the Indian economy and its capacity to bounce back.”

He added that sectors like tourism, urban development, infrastructure, and agri-based industry had great potential to take forward the economy and for employment generation, according to an official statement released after the meeting. Modi also called for focused efforts from all stakeholders to achieve the target of nearly doubling the size of the Indian economy to \$5 trillion by 2024.

With the prime minister said to be taking direct charge of the upcoming 2020–21 Union Budget,

economists and sector experts advised him to keep aside fiscal concerns and embark on an expanded spending programme to revive growth. The prime minister was also advised to restore the credibility of official economic data.

“There were suggestions that while it is good to have fiscal discipline, this has been a challenging period, given the extent of the economic slowdown, so the markets won't punish any decision to go for an expansion,” a participant told *Business Standard* after the meeting. The person said the prime minister was asked about the ways the Centre was planning to earn revenue next fiscal year.

Another person who attended the meeting said the prime minister was apprised of the importance of credible data on the fiscal balance, and urged that the Budget should be honest about the real fiscal deficit.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari, and Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal, besides NITI Aayog Vice-Chairman Rajiv Kumar, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Amitabh Kant and other senior officials of the think-tank, were in the meeting.

### FROM THE EXPERTS

- Boost spending and public investment
- Remove policy uncertainty in taxation, rules and regulations
- Boost exports and take advantage of US–China trade war
- Corruption in lower-level bureaucracy needs to be removed

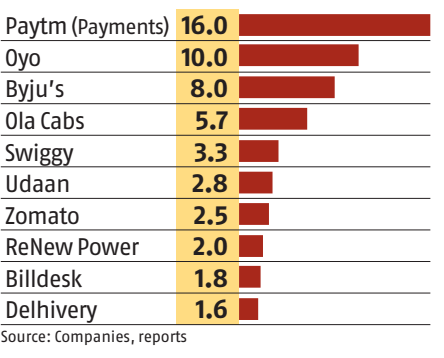
## TAX DEPT ALLOWS SIMPLE FORMS FOR FILING RETURNS BY JOINT PROPERTY OWNERS



Rolling back its week-old order, the income-tax department on Thursday allowed joint owners of a single-house property to file income tax returns using simple Form-1 (Sahaj) or Form-4 (Sugam). On January 3, it had debarred individual taxpayers owning a house property in joint ownership and those who paid ₹1 lakh in electricity bills in a year or incurred ₹2 lakh expense on foreign travel from filing their annual income returns using the simple return forms.

PTI

## VALUATION OF INDIAN UNICORN START-UPS



start-up space. Its portfolio in the country ranges from consumer focused e-commerce companies that are vital for the growth of the sector, such as Flipkart, Delhivery, Grofers, Quikr and PolicyBazaar, to mention a few.

After tasting success with Flipkart, one of its earliest investments, where it had pumped in around \$1 billion, the PE major is now doubling down its focus on the Indian start-up space, under its new investment head Scott Shleifer.

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# ED likely to attach Chanda Kochhar's residence, assets

Their market value could be around ₹800 crore

SHRIMI CHOUDHARY  
New Delhi, 9 January

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) is likely to make a provisional attachment of assets and properties belonging to former ICICI Bank managing director and chief executive officer Chanda Kochhar and husband, Deepak Kochhar, in connection with the Videocon loan case.

The assets may include her plush South Mumbai apartment, besides certain shares, investments and offices of Deepak Kochhar's companies including Nupower Renewables.

The investment value of these assets is estimated at around ₹100 crore. But, their market value could be much higher at around ₹800 crore, said a source in the enforcement agency.

This will be the first big action in the case filed last January, accusing Chanda Kochhar and eight others for ICICI Bank's irregularities in sanctioning loans to the Videocon group.

A text message sent to Chanda Kochhar went unanswered.

According to sources, the federal agency will issue a provisional attachment order of proceeds of crime under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) by the end of this week. Legally speaking, this order will be valid for 180 days until a court confirms it and allows it to make a final confiscation on the grounds that the assets



Chanda Kochhar, former ICICI Bank MD and CEO

were created out of the proceeds of money laundering.

The acquisition of the current family residence of Kochhar at 45, CCI Chambers CHS Limited (Churchgate area opposite the Cricket Club of India), has been under the probe agency's lens due

## STORY SO FAR

### 2018

**February:** CBI launches preliminary enquiry in ICICI–Videocon loan matter

**March:** ICICI Bank board backs then MD & CEO Chanda Kochhar

**April:** Sebi initiates preliminary enquiry, seeks explanation over conflict of interest

**May:** Sebi issues show-cause notice to ICICI Bank, Kochhar

Bank's board orders an independent inquiry under Justice B N Srikrishna

### 2019

**January:** Srikrishna panel indicts Kochhar, finds violation in bank's code of conduct

**February:** ED files criminal case of money laundering against Kochhar, others

to its complex transaction involving Deepak Kochhar and firms linked to Videocon group.

This complex transaction was also highlighted by the ICICI Bank-appointed panel headed by former Supreme Court Judge BN Srikrishna.

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## RBI approves Aadhaar-based video KYC

NEHA ALAWADHI & ANUP ROY  
New Delhi/Mumbai, 9 January

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Thursday allowed video-based authentication as an alternative to the accepted e-KYC

(know-your-customer) practices, but such verification will be Aadhaar-based, either online or offline.

The need for video-KYC was proposed in the report of the Expert Committee on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, headed by UK Sinha, former chairman of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) in June last year.

The panel observed that currently for conducting even e-KYC, the customer has to be physically present and the whole process takes lots of data handling. On the other hand, in video-KYC, the whole process can be done simply through a video chat where the customer can display documents. Such video-KYC can be done through Google Duo or Apple FaceTime, the committee had recommended.

Changes in the offering

- RBI revises master direction on KYC
- Video KYC will have to be verified through Aadhaar
- No foreign app is likely to be used as data needs to be stored onshore
- Customer will have to give his consent
- Geotagging is a must to ensure presence of customer in the country

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SURAJEET DAS GUPTA  
New Delhi, 9 January

Bharti Airtel on Thursday received offers for subscriptions aggregating over \$10 billion, three times its target of \$3 billion, through a combination of qualified institutional placement (QIP) and foreign currency convertible bonds (FCCB), according to banking sources.

The issue opened Wednesday and has already been oversubscribed and according to banking sources the allocation of the shares will be made next week.

According to sources, Fidelity, Blackrock, Goldman Sachs, BNP Paribas, Citigroup, Warburg Pincus, J P Morgan, Axis Capital, ICICI Pru, SBI Mutual, Aditya Birla Mutual HFDC Mutual and Temasek Holdings among others have offered to subscribe to the QIP.

For the FCCB portion, offers have come from Blackrock, GIC of Singapore (which has also offered to subscribe the QIP), Barclays, Societe Generale and Standard Chartered Bank, among others. A Bharti Airtel spokesperson, however, declined to comment on the issue.

GIC of Singapore currently holds around 4 per cent in Bharti Airtel.

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## FUNDRAISING PLAN

\$3 billion

Issue size

\$2 billion

Through QIP,

and the

remaining via

foreign currency convertible

bonds (FCCB)

₹452 QIP floor price per share

Fidelity, Blackrock, Goldman

Sachs, BNP Paribas, Citigroup,

Warburg Pincus, JPMorgan,

Axis Capital, ICICI Pru, SBI

Mutual, Aditya Birla Mutual

HFDC Mutual and Temasek

Holdings have offered to

subscribe to the QIP

₹35,000 crore AGR and

spectrum usage charge dues

which Airtel has to pay by

Jan–end

STOCK UP

Airtel

(Price in ₹)

485

470

455

440

425

Jan 2

Jan 9

455.0

459.9

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