

Expressions



Volume: II, Issue: II

February 2021

'Budget will boost Covid-hit economy'

Rahul Mohanto

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman, on 1st February 2021, presented the Union Budget 2021 in Parliament. This year's budget trounces focus on the seven shafts for revitalizing the economy - Health and Wellbeing, Physical and Financial Capital and Infrastructure, Inclusive Development for India, Re-exhilarating Human Capital, Innovation and R&D, and Minimum Government Maximum Governance policy

Hit hardest by the pandemic, the Union budget induces a sense of hope in the lives of the common man. In India, the Union budget appears like a televised affair influencing the zillions of lives. From COVID related reforms to providing stability to startups, this budget has it all. Before the announcement of Union Budget, the buzz that gets fabricated appended with the bandwagon of expectations sprang to turn stronger. Many anticipate getting some concessions from the tax

The Supplementary Nutrition Program and the Poshan Abhiyan are set to be consolidated as Mission Poshan 2.0

₹2,217cr
will be apportioned
for 42 metropolitan
centers, To handle
the quandary of air
pollution

■ The limit of Tax Audit will surge for persons who employ digital transactions as much as 95% of the total transactions

■ The budget promises 100% electrification of Railways to be completed by 2023

Breaking down the old tradition, this year's budget was not printed but was made available in a digital format

burden, while others dreamt of having more disposable income.

Talking about the role of the budget to mitigate the economic problems and addressing the macroeconomic challenges, CA Shivani Gupta, tax expert, says that this expansionary Union Budget 2021-22 is not only path-breaking but will also prop up the flagging economy

amid the Covid-19 pandemic. She adds this budget has proposed to set up a Dispute Resolution Committee to decrease the uncertainty of tax assessments for taxpayers. Additionally, the Union Budget has also inscribed some of the most litigated technical tax issues under the income tax law.

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Editor's Desk

Campuses across Amity University in different locations have started re-opening in a phased manner with a cautious approach keeping in mind the students' safety and Covid-19 health protocols. The university carried out a



survey asking for students' choice for their 'Off Campus' and 'On Campus' preference and based on this the university has decided to run classes in hybrid mode (offline along with online). The varsity hostels also reopened with students being given the choice to stay.

All measures for the sanitization and maintenance had come into practice from first week of February so as to ensure when students visit the campus and hostels, Covid protocols were in place.

While majority of students, as per the survey, still preferred to remain indoors (Work from Home) particularly those in the remote locations while those in small number with the requirement of Lab based practical started trickling in batches.

The university has planned to re-open in phased manner with final semesters getting the preference followed by Intermediary and first semesters being the last. This has been done in order to avoid crowd and maintain social distancing. The focus of the authorities is to ensure students do not miss out on 'hands-on' experience for their practical courses.

Though the campus is devoid of students and the usual hustle bustle in corridors, we hope to see them back in action soon.

Prof (Dr) Sanjay M Johri

ASCO alumni carves niche in tinsel town

Nothing can be a greater dose of inspiration than knowing about someone who has been a part of the same institution and has achieved milestones in the fields that many of us dream to reach.

Bringing you the story of Aditya Jha, an Amity Lucknow alumnus (2013-16 batch), who's doing a phenomenal job in the music, writing, and acting industries in Mumbai today. Along with being an extremely multitalented person, he also has an inclination towards spirituality. He connected with ISKCON in 2018, talks about Krishna consciousness, and firmly believes that 'Bhagwad Gita' has the answers to all the questions of life.

Born and brought up in Patna, Aditya did his bachelor's from ASCO, Lucknow and he acknowledges Amity has taught him life skills. He won Radio City Super Singer Season-5 while he was in ASCO during Radio Awards series. After completing graduation, he got a job offer in Lucknow, but he preferred to move to Patna and worked as an anchor in Doordarshan. Subsequently, he moved to his dream city, Mumbai. Aditya's parents Dr. Rakesh Jha and Mrs. Madhu Jha

ALUMNI CORNER

were extremely supportive of all his endeavors.

Aditya started making short music videos using his phone with a creative twist of merging singing with storytelling. Multitalented as he was, he parallelly prepared for Xavier's, Mumbai and did his PG in Film and TV Production Direction.

Since his idea of the music videos was quite creative and unique, his work was acknowledged, and he got a chance to sing few songs with Sony Mix. Good in scriptwriting, he also worked as the Executive Creative Head for a show named 'Chandrakanta' on Life OK.

His writing career got a boost when Adesh K Arjun, who written screenplay for hit movies like Suryavansham, Amitraaz, and many more, recognized the talent and encouraged Aditya to write more. Later, he got a placement in MX Player. Since, there were scarce writing opportunities, he moved on and wrote for Comedy Circus. Afterward, he also worked with Eros Now, then got a chance to work in a podcast with well-known entertainment personnel Vir Das.

Through his writing skills and experiences, Aditya wrote for the very popular ongoing show on Sony TV— 'Story 9 Months Ki'. Though he started as a dialogue writer for the show, his narrations, performing, and acting skills were recognized by the producer of the show Anjum Abbas. The multitalented writer gave an audition for the role of the character whose dialogues he wrote, which had everyone hooked and this marked the beginning of his acting career.

-Vaishali Gautam



Beat WFH, pandemic blues with small getaways

Anushka Bhakta

The lethal blow of the Coronavirus virus and lockdowns had tied the entire population to their homes. The confinement not only affected our personal and professional growth, but also took a mighty toll on our mental health. Sleepless nights, body ache, depression and many other health issues have become very prominent with the commencement of work from home format that demands working 24 hours a day and having to juggle between personal and professional lives. This calls for a weekend getaway from the “new normal” and even if you are not planning to go out, there is always a way to get that getaway.

The brunt of new online mode of work and education is extreme discomposure to both the eyes and body as we hardly go out. Pritha Tarafdar, senior data analyst at Analytics Plus says, “I eventually realized that not interacting with people or going

From watching our favorite shows to even going out for a walk, a small change might just be it. So, this weekend, take a small break and loosen the tangle of mind to liberate your body from all the stress

out due to the pandemic was taking a toll on my mental health. Moreover, too much time spent on digital platforms was also adding to the stress.” On asking how Pritha de-stresses herself she replies, “Cooking, reading books, watching old movies and occasionally meeting friends works like a charm for me”.

Ramit Bakshi, Team Lead at Cognizant says, “When you spend your half of the day with your colleagues, they become another family. Since the WFH format started I have not met them but talking even on phone is like a remedy. Also, thanks to all the OTT platforms, I can always binge on a plethora of web series and de-stress not only on weekends but at times, also after I close my office laptop and switch to the shows.”

Thus, we see even if we are stressing ourselves with a lot of work, weekends come as a blessing to us all. We have no idea when the “normal” will be back, but we can always arm ourselves with the preventive measures and call it a getaway. From watching our favorite shows to even going out for a walk, a small change might just be it. So, this weekend, take a deep breath and release all the stress from our mind and body, take a small break and loosen the tangle of mind to liberate your body from all the stress.

‘Budget will boost Covid-hit economy’

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Mohit Singh, Income Tax, and GST advocate holds a different view as he believes that it is not a cost-effective budget and there are no specific changes that will affect the lives of a common man or legal sector as a whole. Though there is some benefit seen for senior citizens 70 years and above but it comes with a drawback that they won’t be able to claim TDS.

For Harshit Verma, financial analyst at Amazon India, the budget looks like a clear foundation for the future. “It has a number of next-level reforms that we needed in these times. The government has increased the healthcare spending by 135%, considering the ongoing vaccination program. The capital expenditure is also up by 35% for the

“ Union Budget is taboo breaking and practical budget that can yield progressive growth and development of the economy

- CA Shivani Gupta | Tax expert

The budget’s implementation will ascertain how history cherishes Budget 2021-22

- Mohit Singh | Advocate

coming year,” he quips and hopes that the government has a good way forward to implement the announcements in full measure.

In a nutshell, the Union budget represents a growth-oriented approach amid a pandemic crisis. It tends to spout various intricacies and nurses to bring revolution in the Indian economy with proper implementation. Breaking down the old tradition, this year’s budget was not printed but was made available in a digital format.

Chaiwalahs back to business as Covid infection dips

Anjali Singh

Health and fitness have always been crucial for all of us. But with the “new normal” lifestyle, our eating-behaviour and fitness took a backseat. A substantial increase in screen time and restricted physical activities also contributed their share in the pandemic-hit lifestyle. Now with the vaccine drive in full swing, 2021 seems to be an apt year to put our fitness goals including healthy diet once again into focus.

In this regard, for Indians, ‘tea’ is not only a part of morning and evening energy beverage, but people have a deep emotional connection with it. “I love having a cup of tea at a tea stall after morning walk every day”, says Sarita Sharma, a housewife. Much like everything else, the global pandemic has not spared the tea stalls as well. Despite the challenges due to COVID-19, the winters saw tea stall owners’ pouring their delectable beverage in scented earthen cups with fresh enthusiasm.

To understand the plight of the ‘chaiwalahs’, this reporter spoke to some tea stall owners of Faridabad, Haryana.

“When the pandemic was announced, I was left with no source of income and help-



lessly went to the village where farming was the only option for survival. I came back in mid-November 2020 and restarted my tea stall. The old customers were hesitant before, but they are coming in a good number now. I open my shop exactly at 6 in the morning despite such cold weather”, shares Ramesh, owner of Pandit Tea Stall located at Sgm Nagar, Faridabad.

While Prabhjeet, owner of Sukhbir Tea Stall at Huda Market, Faridabad, believes that selling tea is like spreading love, especially in winters. But this time Prabhjeet serves tea with extra caution about safety and hygiene.

“Yes, there were problems last year due to lockdowns but now life is gradually returning to normal and I am now serving tea to my regular customers while taking all the precautionary measures,” he quips with a smile.

The famous JD Tea & Coffee Shop of Nehru Ground, Faridabad,

also restarted their services on the New Year after a long gap of 9 months. “We are back with our famous Delhi NCR tea and keeping all the safety measures in place. Winter is the best time for us for a revival as people are fond of tea more during such a cold weather”, says owner Mr. Jayant Dev.

The tea stall owners suffered from income loss due to lockdowns during the pandemic, but the long queues of vehicles in front of the tea stalls can be noticed again. The stall owners are ready with their chairs and tables, waiting for the customers and preparing heavenly cups of tea. Receiving the love of by passer-by, morning walkers, and those who sit in groups for ‘chai pe charcha’ mark the ever-needed revival of tea stall vendors who are back with a bang to cater tea lovers.

Selling tea is like spreading love and winter is one such weather when everyone craves for ‘garma-garam chai’, says

Prabhjeet | Tea Stall owner, Faridabad

OF WINTER CHILLS AND GRILLS!



Drishti Vanaik

The season of bonfires and warm delicacies to fight the freezing winds mark the season of chilly winters post Makar Sankranti. From the lowest temperature of 12.6 degree Celsius in 2019 to 7.5 degree Celsius in the winters of 2020-2021, it has been penetrating cold in Lucknow.

Amidst these data, conversation with different people in the city throws a light on a myriad of other aspects of the biting cold weather ranging from food cravings and lethargy to monetary constraints during the chilly winter days.

Apart from the conventional food like mouth-watering Kulche Chole to divine Gajar Ka Halwa, Manoj Pachani, owner of the Richie Rich restaurant in Aliganj, Lucknow says, "For main course people usually order items like Dal Tadka with Missi Roti or butter naan with Labaabdard chicken curry and other items which usually provide warmth". For sweet dishes, Daya Shankar Gupta, owner of Shyaam Swaad, Lucknow states, "Various items like Barfi, Pede, Kesar Dhooth, Haldi Ka Dhooth and Malai Makkhan are

much in demand during this time."

On the one hand, teenagers enjoy the weather and relish these food items, however, on the other hand the elderly have a different tale to tell. Mrs. Chauhan, one of the members of the Samarpan old age home, Vijay Kunj colony, Lucknow, says, "Old age comes with so many challenges, and winters have their share of difficulties, complications and trouble. The winters have affected my sleep schedule as well as daily routine of other residents," she sighed. The morning walk routine of many old age people got affected due to chilly wind. "Those having cardiac and/or respiratory problems need to take precautions", adds Ram Manohar, another member of the Samarpan old age home, who used to love going for morning walk before winters.

Lethargy among teenagers has been found common as drowsiness overpowers during winters and coming out of the cozy blanket, especially in work from home format and education, seems immensely difficult. Sukriti Bansa, psychology student says, "The best place in the world during warm afternoons and chilly night and early morning is my bed. You can call it laziness but

what to do?"

Our beloved cozy blankets, comforting heaters, and a comfortable shelter make our winter life pleasurable, but the life of people living on the roadside is completely different. Those deprived of the basic amenities strive hard to fight the brisk cold and protect their families. Many homeless people can be found with torn blankets on the frosty footpaths. Rain Baseras arranged by the government provide these destitute a comfortable shelter during chilly nights. "Deprived of sufficient woolens we spend half of our nights sitting around a bonfire", says Ram Asrey, a rickshaw puller for whom Rain Basera is the only home.

Well...bottomline no doubt a harsh winter spells misfortunes for the have nots but even those who have everything feel the chill albeit wrapped in the comfort of their homes.

Along with these restaurants, Lucknow's famous Sharma Tea stall sees brisk sales with people lining up to eat samosas with chai. The tea stall owner adds "People are thrilled to have Kulhad Chai and our sales have showed an upsurge this winter".



UNITED COLOURS OF LUCKNOW

Lensman: Trilochan S Kalra







Valentine celebrations

a muted affair this year

Riddhi Bhargava

Richard Cadbury invented the first Valentine's Day candy box in the late 1800s. According to one of the articles by theholidayspot, Worldwide, over 50 million roses and about 1 billion Valentine's Day cards are exchanged and given for Valentine's Day each year.

In the year 496, when Valentine's Day was first celebrated, people would have never thought it would end up as a week-long worldwide celebration instead of just a day or two. Earlier, a pagan fertility ritual was held in the month of February every year. However, the Pope abolished it and later, poet Chaucer in the Middle Ages linked Valentine with romantic love. February, since then, initiates its presence with the flavor of love as the town is painted in red.

This year the Valentine celebration was quite different with people on the one hand welcoming the vaccine for Coronavirus while on other hand

the fear of infection kept them from celebrating the day in public places. Clubs and restaurants upped their ante while police also kept a tight vigil despite threat from some radical organisations about celebrating the day.

Amidst these, people were yet ready to celebrate the Valentine's week with great pomp and show, as told by club manager Shiv Gour of Farzi Café. He adds, "It's been years since I first stepped into this industry and since then I have always tried to come up with something new every year. Valentine's Day this year will have same color of love, happiness and celebration but keeping all Covid protocols in mind." Floor manager of My

Bar Headquarter Inder Sahu was found concerned about safety but had made arrangements for celebrations. My Bar and LBW provided free shots for women. These clubs of Gomti Nagar, Lucknow planned the events to run till 11:30pm to keep everything in order.

Keeping a watch on a building that has 18 clubs is a huge concern for a day like Valentine but sub-inspectors of Gominagar thana made sure that the patrolling was strict. DJ Modern Monk a.k.a Sandeepan quotes, "Precautionary approach is

the key to one's safety. Post Corona phase everyone wants to celebrate but we must keep in mind that the threat still looms large".

Valentine is a day of celebration not only for the loved ones but also for the people you really care about. Aman & Satjot who were married recently are celebrating their 2nd Valentine with the family as they say, "It (Valentine) is not just for couples but for all you care and love throughout your journey— friends, family, and even faculties who been throughout with you".

Even Swanky & Nitish, CA by profession promise their little son to be their date for the day, which they celebrated together. It is rightly said love has no age bar, Mrs. & Mr. Khatri on this day celebrated their six-decade long relationship. "We have made a tradition to visit a church every year this day and will continue to follow the tradition," they say with a smile.

So, Corona or not, Valentine Day was celebrated with much funk and gusto albeit keeping safety protocols in mind.

Fond of street food?

Eat smart to lose weight, stay fit

Saumya Agrawal

The strenuous efforts it takes to fight tooth and nail with the urge of having street food while losing weight is a herculean task. It is obvious that on a path of eating healthy to lose those extra pounds, gulping down pav-bhaaji with extra butter or street-side steamed momos is off the table. However, there are some smart choices you can make while exploring the mouth-watering street foods that could go with your weight-loss plans, not burn a hole in your pocket and ease up this battle for you.

"I tried almost every form of diet, be it intermittent fasting, keto diet and what not, but I always ended up eating more than what I should. Finally, I decided not to suppress my cravings but to go out, explore food items with right amount of nutrients, which worked out very well for me." said Tarushi Goel who has shed over 20kgs during the lockdown period.

A list of healthy street food options came up during a telephonic interview with Divyansh Sharma, a well-known theatre artiste and a

Zumba instructor. "I never advise my clients to starve and completely refrain from eating what they love. Although it is true that a large constituent of street foods lack nutrients or any significant health benefits but there are some street food options that do not necessarily fall

under the list of food items that one should avoid." said Divyansh. He continued, "Bhel puri, sweet potato, steamed idli or plain dosa, boiled eggs, peanut chaat, grilled sandwich are some of the options that add very less calories in your daily intake. They contain some amount of nutrients and also satisfy your taste buds at the same time".

After having such conversations with more than 10 people at two different gyms, it was observed that almost everyone loves eating street food, but one has to be thoughtful in making

the right choices of what to eat, when to eat and how much to eat in order to be on the track of healthy eating. Certain street foods do not make you go off track but help you deal with cravings of eating something different every now and then.



Bhargavi Singh

Shivali, a sweet and bright 7-year-old, knows a variety of poems by heart and never misses an opportunity to recite them in front of an audience. Waqar, 13, loves maths and aspires to be a Maths teacher when he grows up, while Harshita, 16, wants to be a government employee. Although the above sound like ordinary dreams, for these kids it's a distant reality which might never come true. All three of these kids have a



his mother. He has accepted the fact that he might not be able to return

to school but is adamant on sending the rest of his siblings back to school. Without even a hint of self-pity, he proudly shares, "I have started saving from now for their education."

Harshita was gearing up to give her 10th board

exams this academic year but as luck would have it, her life took a complete turn. Her father, who is a labourer, was out of work for many months due to the pandemic and she had to start working as a house help like her mother to feed her family.

In the beginning she studied regularly, but upon stepping in as a domestic helper, she didn't have any time or energy left for studies. Witnessing the overburdened family, Harshita's relatives have started pressuring her parents to get her married. However, her mother, Meena Devi, is a strong advocate of her education and fortunately Harshita's education is still in the picture as she impatiently waits for her school to re-open.

All of these underprivileged children, aspire to live life differently and are determined to achieve their dreams. The pandemic has been hard on one and all, but the spark in the eyes

Underprivileged bright kids go down the pandemic 'BLACK HOLE'

While most of us have spent the past year adjusting to the new normal of online classes, many underprivileged kids could not afford such luxuries and had to drop out

few things in common. They love going to school and studying, reside in makeshift homes near Kukrail Nala slum of Badshah Nagar, Lucknow, and haven't been to school for almost a year now due to restrictions imposed by pandemic.

Shivali was about to start her school life when the pandemic hit. After the initial two months of lockdown, when the country reached its unlocking phase, her education had come to a standstill. As online schooling was out of the question for Shivali and her peers, the local primary school gave all of them some copies for practicing till the prevailing situation improved. Her father, who repairs bags for a living, is hopeful that his daughter will return to school this year and learn new poems.

Waqar, the eldest of 4 siblings, lost his father because of liver ailment in June last year. Since then, he has been looking after their stone carving business along with

Sanjana Saxena

A diverse country like India, characterised by several religions, languages, and castes, regularly confronts large scale riots, dharnas and protests from the people. The Article 19 of our constitution grants citizens the right to assemble peacefully and without arms. However, the phenomenon of protests turning into violent civil disorder is sadly not a rare occurrence anymore.

Recently, India, the world's oldest and largest democracy, saw another violent protest where agitated farmers demanding to repeal three new agriculture laws, stormed into the Red Fort and hoisted a religious flag. Republic day of 2021 saw breaking of barricades, firing of tear gas shells, stone pelting and loss of life and property in the capital. Shash-

We have forgotten the Gandhian way of protest. Burning or breaking public property, blocking railways and roads are a necessary modus operandi of protests these days

Aakarsh Bajpai

wat Vajpayee, a law student, says, "The farmers' protest at a historical place like Red Fort has tainted the image of our nation. This incident should not have taken place. If the rampaging mob destroys public property and goods, then it should be recovered from such violators." The 61 days of peaceful protest boiled down to a huge loss for both protesters and the government. Therefore, there are rules laid down by different countries to bridge the gap between protest and civil unrest.

From protest to civil unrest: Let's stop and think

When we look at various countries, we can see that the US Constitution allows peaceful protests, given permits are obtained well in advance regarding time, manner, and venue. In Britain, the police are notified at least six days before protest and the government can put an end to it in case of public disorder. However, in Spain, protesting in public place or disrupting traffic is not allowed as per the Constitutional Court. In India, the Supreme Court has warned people not to use public places for protesting indefinitely but few pay attention and it is the daily commuters and common man who bears the brunt.

"In my opinion it is a sheer failure of intelligence and agencies responsible for intelligence inputs. I agree that role of police is also under scrutiny but if thousands of protestors get aggressive then the authorities have to look into lot of areas and then take decisions. Protest and violence should not be mixed up as violence gives a dent to the positive protest and slows it pace", says Amit Massey, academician.

These views are echoed by Aakarsh Bajpai, a journalism student, who says, "We see frequent friction among different communities and classes in our country, but let it not become an impediment to the nation's growth, which is exactly what happens when protestors resort to arson and violence. Police should acknowledge the fact that demonstrators have a right to protest so they should act as facilitators and not create obstacles. On other hand, protestors should also keep in mind that their cause of protest is peaceful, apolitical and for the benefit of masses".

One can only hope that the sovereign powers and rights of citizens are exercised wisely to not cross the constitutional decorum in the process.



From Jat protests in Haryana, CAA protests at a public place to the Kashmir unrest, our country has seen a myriad of protests that taking violent turn.

UNPAID INTERNSHIPS: An outdated tradition

Sonia Singh

There is a popular saying, “If you’re good at something, never do it for free”, but when it comes to learning and applying new skills in the professional scenario does it exist?

When a student opts for a professional course at graduation and/or post-graduation level, the course structure of the program is such to provide both theoretical and practical knowledge. Theory classes, which are considered foundation stone of learning something new are conducted on a daily basis. Once the student gains partial knowledge of his subjects, he is encouraged to apply those learnings and learn current industry skills through internship.

An internship is a supervised, structured learning experience in a professional environment where students get the opportunity of career exploration and development. Through this experience, student gains working knowledge of his subject while continuously accessing his skills and current industry requirements. Internship also offers the employer an opportunity to bring fresh energy and ideas in the workplace. Employer plays a key role of industry mentor who provides guidance, feedback, receptiveness and models professionalism. This experience also provides an insight for building a pipeline for future full-time employees.

Internships are minimum of 4 weeks (typically full-time during summer) and maximum of 8-12 weeks (typically during the end of academic course). As part of the course structure, student receives academic course credit for his rigorous labour.

This practice when performed outside the academic supervision i.e., when a fresh graduate is hired as an unpaid intern instead of full-time employee for the same labour and dedication expected from a paid employee is unjust.

Our very own media industry where there are far more entry-level candidates than job openings, it becomes very con-

venient for an employer to hire an unpaid intern (with or without prior work experience) in lieu of a future employment opportunity, which may or may not happen at the end of the tenure is quite common.

Many eager job seekers look at it as an opportunity to make an entrance in this close knitted industry where they are aspiring to make a mark.

This practice is unethical at many levels. When an individual provides labour with their time, skills and efforts which will be monetised by the organisation should be paid fairly for their work. Let’s say if a journalism student aspires to join a newspaper, he is expected to join as an unpaid intern as the organisation believes that they will be providing working knowledge of print media. But expecting a fresh graduate with prior internship experience in the same field to join as an intern (unpaid) with a defined job role is not alright.

This behaviour of the employees results in deepening of the gap between the varied economic sections of the society. Going for an unpaid internship in a metropolitan city where an individual has to manage his basic living expense on his own eventually brings burden to the financial state of the whole family. People who can afford it, eventually get many more opportunities in comparison to people who may be far more talented but cannot afford to bear such overheads.

Learning new skill is a part of every job nowadays. Providing learning opportunity cannot be translated to free labour. Employers need to understand, providing a fair stipend or full-time salary for equal work done by an intern will only encourage the youth to step out, work and earn with dignity. This will not only benefit the new talent but will also create an impactful change in the organisation and eventually in the industry’s progress.

So, as the saying goes, “If you are good at something, never do it for free” because there are employers who are monetising through your labour.