

CSR TODAY

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A WORLD OF HURT

CLIMATE DISASTERS IN 2021 RAISE ALARM OVER FOOD SECURITY

Human-driven climate change is fueling weather extremes — from record drought to massive floods — that are hammering key agricultural regions around the world



CSR INITIATIVE

IIT Madras helps TN Potters meet modern demands such as Microwaveable Cooking Utensils

CSR ISSUE

Coastal communities take the lead: How plans to safeguard Southeast Asia's biodiverse waters are evolving

CSR FUTURE

Climate action must happen 'for our people, not to them', cities say



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CSR spending goes up



Rajesh Tiwari
Publisher
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**COMING BACK
TO FISCAL 2020,
THE NUMBER OF
COMPANIES AND THEIR
CUMULATIVE SPENDING
PRINTED HIGHER YET
AGAIN, WITH OVER
TWO-THIRDS OF THE
ELIGIBLE LISTED ONES
SPENDING 2% OR MORE
OF THEIR NET PROFITS
ON CSR INITIATIVES,
AND ~10% SPENDING
3% OR MORE.**

In what comes as a healthy sign, the spending on corporate social responsibility (CSR) in India has crossed the Rs 1 lakh crore milestone, just seven years after it was made mandatory, a CRISIL analysis shows.

As much as 40% of this is estimated to have been incurred in the past two fiscals as companies rolled up their sleeves to fight the Covid-19 pandemic that set in towards the fag-end of fiscal 2020.

Our estimation, based on data disclosed in annual reports, pegs overall CSR spending in fiscal 2020 at Rs 21,231 crore, with 1,387 listed companies accounting for ~Rs 14,431 crore (~26% more than in fiscal 2019), and 19,962 unlisted ones Rs 6,800 crore (~7% less than in fiscal 2019).

In fiscal 2021, again, assuming the spend was around the mandated mark of 2% of average profit of the preceding three fiscals, eligible companies would have spent ~Rs 22,000 crore on CSR, including Rs 14,986 crore by more than 1,700 listed ones and ~Rs 7,072 crore by unlisted entities.

While the actual spending for the two fiscals can be corroborated only once annual reports for last fiscal become available and are analysed in coming months, one trend is clear: Covid-19 has gobbled up a chunk of the money.

In the first exercise, CRISIL took the top 500 companies by CSR spending in fiscal 2020 and calculated their expenditure on Covid-19 relief since March 23, 2020, when it became eligible for CSR calculation¹. This showed them spending ~Rs 11,000 crore, as of June 2021.

For the second exercise, it considered the top 100 companies by revenue and by CSR spending in fiscal 2020. Of these


200, 70 companies appeared in both the lists, while 60 appeared in only one, leaving 130 unique companies. These 130 have spent ~Rs 8,500 crore (including support through corporate groups²) on Covid-19, across the two waves, as of June 2021.

For now, it is heartening to see that spending and reporting on CSR has continued to improve.

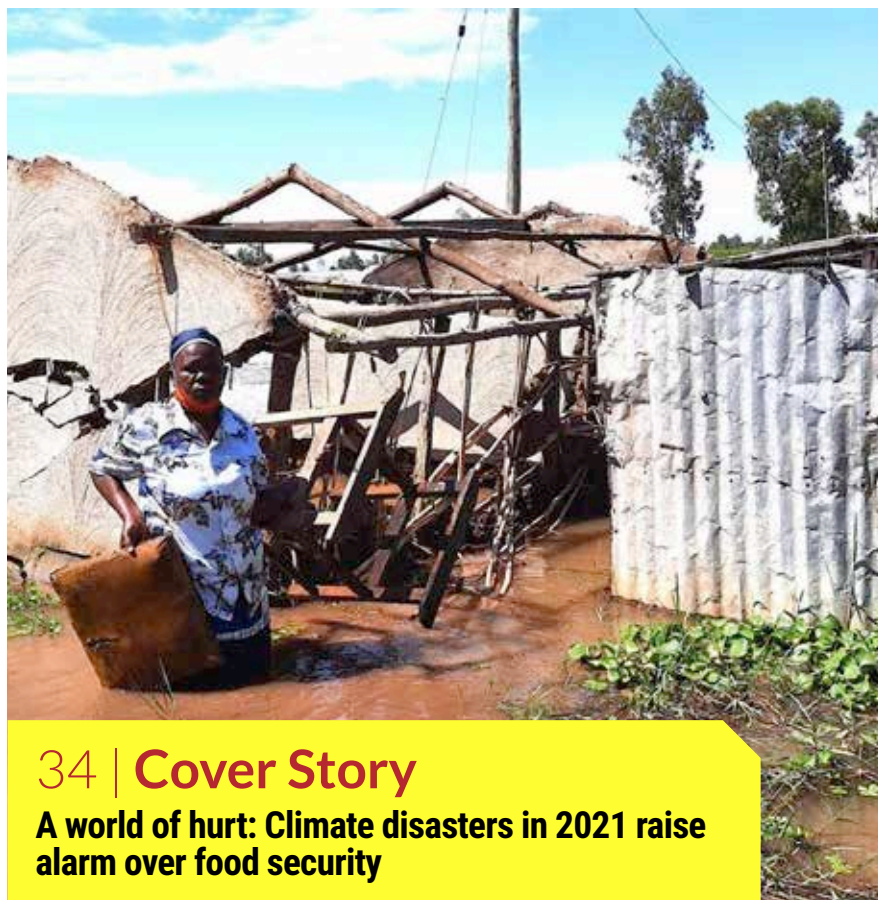
In fiscal 2020, the number of companies and their cumulative spending printed higher yet again, with over two-thirds of the eligible listed ones spending 2% or more of their net profits on CSR initiatives, and ~10% spending 3% or more.

The continued improvement in spending and reporting on CSR is heartening, for sure. The successive waves of Covid-19 have, however, been a litmus test of corporate altruism – with companies having to balance employee well-being initiatives, business imperatives and their social contract. Given the expectations of a third wave, the probability of diverting more funds during this fiscal seems imminent. Thus, how long the momentum holds remains to be seen.

Coming back to fiscal 2020, the number of companies and their cumulative spending printed higher yet again, with over two-thirds of the eligible listed ones spending 2% or more of their net profits on CSR initiatives, and ~10% spending 3% or more.

Among sectors, manufacturing, energy and financial services accounted for over 60% of the spending. Public sector companies (accounting for ~7% of the total eligible companies) contributed ~32% of the total CSR spending, while private ones (accounting for 87% of total eligible companies) spent ~63%. 

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Carlsberg India initiates WASH project in Mysuru for a safe school return

As part of its WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Health) projects, Carlsberg India has initiated a project towards helping the community in Mysuru. The program is aimed at supporting the school with basic educational infrastructure, such as, purified drinking water, re-building toilets, and renovating hand wash facilities, which are crucial elements of the learning environment in schools.

The community initiative comes at a time when primary education plays a vital role in shaping and nurturing future talents. Carlsberg India understands the need for developing high-quality infrastructure that facilitates student performance, reduces dropout rates, among other key benefits. The identified schools are The Primary School, Uppaligara Hundi Village and The Higher Primary School, Hulimavu Village both schools located in Hulimavu Grama Panchayath, in proximity to Carlsberg's Mysore Brewery.

The project stands as a promising step towards providing highest



standard infrastructure to the government schools and benefitting the children of the community. The project handover function was held in the presence of D.K. Lingaraju, Joint Director, District Industries Centre (DIC), Mysore, Raju, Block Education Officer, Nanjangud, Taluk, Mahesh, Block Resource Coordinator, Nanjangud Taluk, Balaji Arunachalam, Carlsberg Mysore Brewery Head, Umashankar, S Manager HR, Carlsberg Mysore Brewery, and Hulimavu Grama Panchayath President along with

other members. Commenting on the social initiative, Muthuraman Ramanathan, Vice President - Operations, Carlsberg India said, "School education acts as a foundation for each child. As schools start opening in regions post COVID-19 lockdowns, we aim to reinstate children's interest in returning to schools in a safe and hygienic environment through the WASH initiative in Mysuru. Carlsberg India is committed to creating community partnerships that go beyond reducing water usage at its breweries and helping communities across the world. The initiative will benefit 250 children in the region.

Carlsberg India initiated the project in collaboration with Desolenator and Ecosoft that will benefit local communities in the Mysuru region and encourage a safe recovery to schools in the backdrop of COVID-19 lockdowns.



L&T Donates Manhole Cleaning Robot to Vadodara Municipal Corporation

Company demonstrates hi-tech solutions to improve the safety and dignity of sanitation workers

L&T has donated a state-of-the-art robot to Vadodara Municipal Corporation to automate the cleaning and maintenance of sewer manholes and put an end to manual scavenging. The robot developed by Genrobotics was recently donated to the city municipal corporation officials by the Hydrocarbon arm of L&T.

This initiative by LTHE in collaboration with city municipality and the Government of Gujarat is aimed at ending the practice of manual scavenging and safeguarding the lives of not just those responsible for cleaning and maintenance of sewers but also the public at large. The intuitive design and friendly UI of the robot is designed keeping in mind the users – manual scavengers – so that they can operate it with ease.

Commenting on this development, Subramanian Sarma, Whole-time Director & Sr. Executive Vice President (Energy), L&T said: “As per our commitment to ESG (Environment, Social and Governance) framework, introduction of this Hi-Tech Robot for manhole cleaning process is aimed at phasing out manual scavenging without compromising the sanitation workers’ livelihoods.”

“Given the ongoing Covid pandemic, mechanization of sewer cleaning operations will lessen sanitation workers’ exposure to



hazardous waste materials and prevent them from developing serious medical conditions. We hope that this automation solution emerges as a trend and all municipalities in the country adopt it soon,” he added.

The project has been implemented with a vision to help and improve the safety and dignity of sanitation workers and bring a positive change in the sanitation workers’ community.

The dehumanizing and degrading practice of manual scavenging is a problem that continues to plague our society. Despite legal provisions against it, the practice has persisted due to lack of alternatives. Deploying a technological solution such as this and its successful implementing could, however, turn the tide in the favour of sanitation workers and get rid of the problem once and for all.

Neuberg Diagnostics partners with MS Dhoni to send the message of health and wellness



MS Dhoni, Former India Skipper and Captain of Chennai Super Kings with the leadership team of Neuberg Diagnostics

Neuberg Diagnostics, India's fourth-largest diagnostic lab chain, announced that it has partnered with ace cricketer, MS Dhoni, for creating awareness about Neuberg's health and wellness campaign and conveying its efforts towards empowering every citizen with better and affordable healthcare.

Dr. GSK Velu, Chairman and Managing Director, Neuberg Diagnostics, said, "MS Dhoni complements our growth mindset, and thus is a strategic fit during our growth

years. We are excited about this association and are honored to have him on board as our evangelist and global brand ambassador. We are keen to take our plethora of diagnostic services across the country and convey our efforts towards empowering every citizen with better and affordable healthcare. Furthermore, Dhoni's commitment towards maintaining good health and fitness resonates well with our mission and will remind people to prioritize their health. Dhoni's backing will enable us to communicate

about our commitment and services more effectively." MS Dhoni, Former India Skipper and Captain of Chennai Super Kings, said, "The leaders at Neuberg are committed to providing affordable healthcare across India, and that really struck me and it's a pleasure to be associated with the team and their various programs aimed at providing access to quality and affordable healthcare. Amidst the Covid-19 pandemic, they have taken up the campaign to raise awareness about health and wellness across age groups. I personally feel that these efforts are important and deserve to be advocated."

On the back of growing footprints, the company has been seeing robust growth. In a matter of four years



(R to L) Dr. GSK Velu, Chairman and Managing Director, Neuberg Diagnostics with MS Dhoni, Former India Skipper and Captain of Chennai Super Kings during the partnership announcement

since its inception, with a presence in three continents, the company ended its FY21 with revenues of Rs.800 crore, and on the back of its differentiated offerings, it is aiming to close FY22 with revenues of Rs.1000 crore with more than 200 labs and 3000 collection centers, located across the world.

MS Dhoni will also enable the company to generate recall across its global markets in the UAE, South Africa and the USA.

A WORLD OF HURT

CLIMATE DISASTERS IN 2021 RAISE ALARM OVER FOOD SECURITY



The floods in East Africa have left thousands displaced, hundreds lives lost, crops have been destroyed and livestock dead. With the current Covid-19 crisis and locusts invasion, flooding is expected to exacerbate the food security situation in the country. Image: Greenpeace.

Human-driven climate change is fueling weather extremes — from record drought to massive floods — that are hammering key agricultural regions around the world, writes **Sue Branford & Glenn Scherer**, Mongabay.com

In July, a video went viral on social media in Argentina showing people walking across what looks like a desert. But it isn't a desert. This is the bed of the Paraná River, part of the second-largest river system in South America. Normally the stream rises in Brazil and reaches the sea via the River Plate, draining a vast watershed covering all of Paraguay, southern Brazil and northern Argentina. Normally the water volume flowing to the Atlantic roughly equals that of the Mississippi River.

What's happening now is not normal. The drying up of large stretches of river comes as the most severe drought since 1944 afflicts the region. No relief is expected in the short term. According to forecasts from Argentina's Ministry of Public Works, the lack of rain will last for at least another three months.

Besides damaging crops, the drought also means barge-hauled grains can't get to market cheaply, forcing Argentina to support commodities transport with \$10.4 million, and costing the nation's grain farmers and exporters \$315 million. It's likely consumers will ultimately foot the bill.

The Paraná region is experiencing "a veritable environmental holocaust," says Rafael Colombo, a member of the Argentinian Association of Environmental Lawyers.

The multiple causes, he states, include "a complex and diversified series of anthropomorphic interventions, associated with the expansion of agro-industrial, ranching, forest, river and mining extractivism over the last 50 years." Add to that the impact of global human-caused climate change.

A WORLD OF HURT

Extreme weather impacts can be expected to dot various parts of the

planet every year, but the Paraná watershed drought isn't an outlier in 2021. Instead, it represents the new normal as major regional bread baskets around the globe are assaulted by unusually high temperatures that exacerbate simultaneous record droughts, bringing disastrous wildfires. Floods, too, are unprecedented this year: While the Paraná endured record drought, the neighboring Amazon watershed in Manaus, Brazil, was battered by unprecedented June deluges.

These planet-wide events all combined are having a detrimental impact on crops and livestock, and though it is too early to calculate the full cost, the world will likely see significant price hikes in coming months on everything from tomatoes to bread to beef.

"Unprecedented" looks to be the theme best describing 2021's extreme weather events: In mid-July, China's Henan province, one of the country's most populous regions, was hit by a year's worth of rain — 640 millimetres (more than 2 feet) — in just three days, a phenomenon "unseen in the last 1,000 years."

At least 71 people died and 1.4 million people fled the floods, even



There have been back-to-back droughts which have pushed communities right to the very edge of starvation.

DAVID BEASLEY,
Executive Director, World Food Programme

Samsung Introduces 'Samsung DOST',

India's Biggest Electronics Sector Skilling Program; Partners With NSDC, Aims to Train 50,000 Youth

Samsung India has announced the launch of 'Samsung DOST' (Digital & Offline Skills Training), a CSR initiative that aims to make 50,000 youth job-ready for the electronics retail sector over the next few years. Samsung, India's largest smartphone and consumer electronics brand, has partnered with India's premier skill development organization, National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), to execute the program through its nationwide skills training centres.

Samsung DOST will be the biggest skills training program in the electronics sector.

Samsung has been India's committed partner for the last 25 years, leading the consumer electronics and smartphones space with strategic investments in manufacturing, R&D, retail and community development. Samsung has set up the world's largest mobile factory in Noida and is a key player in the government's large-scale electronics manufacturing push, which is expected to create significant number of job opportunities for youth in manufacturing as well as the retail sector.

Considering the potential of employment generation post skill training, Samsung has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with NSDC for the 'Samsung DOST' program under which youth will receive 200 hours of blended classroom and online training, followed by five months of on-the-job training (OJT) at Samsung retail stores, along with a monthly stipend at par with

industry standards. This will help the youth acquire new competencies and skills needed for jobs in India's fast growing electronics retail environment.

Ken Kang, President & CEO, Samsung Southwest Asia said: "Samsung has been India's committed partner over the last 25 years, and has contributed to people and communities across India through its citizenship programs. The Samsung DOST program is aligned to the Government of India's Skill India initiative and is an embodiment of our vision of #Powering-DigitalIndia that seeks to empower the next generation of young India. With this new program, we aim to close the skills and employability gap among youth in the country, helping them find jobs in the fast growing electronics retail sector."

The participants will be trained at various training centres accredited and approved by NSDC. The training will be in accordance to the National Skill Qualification Framework, which is aligned to industry needs, and will include skillsets such as customer engagement, managing sales counter, handling customer queries, product demonstration & selling skills and several other



Ken Kang, President & CEO,
Samsung Southwest Asia



Partha Ghosh, VP & Head,
Corporate Communications &
Corporate Citizenship CSR at
Samsung Electronics

soft skills, including post-Covid etiquettes, preparing them for a career in electronics retail. During the OJT, participants will be made familiar with the functioning of electronics retail stores through live demonstrations, role play techniques and hands-on training.

The participants for the program will be youth who have completed school education and will be mobilized through NSDC's approved training partners at 120 centres across India. The assessments and certification of the participants will be done by the Telecom Sector Skill Council (TSSC) after the partici-

pants complete their OJT.

With 'Samsung DOST', Samsung is expanding its skilling programs in India, as part of its CSR initiatives.

Samsung has been running the Samsung Technical School program since 2013 in partnership with the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) and Departments of Technical Education in different states. Under this program, youth are provided vocational skills to repair the latest smartphones, televisions, refrigerators, washing machines and other electronics. 

IIT Madras helps TN Potters meet modern demands such as Microwaveable Cooking Utensils

A Common Facility Centre has been set up to help traditional potters in Perumudivakkam village of Tiruvallur District, make diversified microwaveable clay products, artistic products, cooking utensils & storage containers, which have higher market value

The Indian Institute of Technology Madras Rural Technology Action Group (RuTAG) has helped establish a Common Facility Centre to help potters in a Tamil Nadu village meet modern consumer demands such as Microwaveable Cooking Utensils. These products have higher market value and will help sustain the traditional potters.

Many traditional potters' families are economically poor and living Below Poverty Line. To increase the earning of the artisans, modern machinery is introduced alongside additional skill and product training to improve not only the productivity but also the wages of the artisans.

IIT Madras is aiding in implementing the Common Facility Centre at Perumudivakkam in Tiruvallur District, located about 50 kilometres from Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

With CSR funding support from Southern Region Pipelines Division of Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL-SRPL), and Centre for Social



Dignitaries viewing the Clay Products made by artisans during an expo organized recently for the artisans at Perumudivakkam village, TN



Microwaveable Clay Products made by artisans at Perumudivakkam village in Tamil Nadu with technical assistance from RuTAG, IIT Madras

Development (CSD), a Nagercoil-based non-governmental organization as the implementation partner at Tiruvallur, IIT Madras had collaborated with Central Glass and Ceramic Institute (CGCRI), Kolkata,

to leverage technology to aid the potters.

Highlighting the role of IIT Madras in this initiative, Prof. Abhijit P. Deshpande, Professor-in-Charge, RuTAG-IIT Madras, said,



Patrolmen document a violation in a marine reserve in West Papua.
Image: Syafri Tuharea, UTPD

COASTAL COMMUNITIES TAKE THE LEAD

How plans to safeguard Southeast Asia's biodiverse waters are evolving



Heat spots in the Amazon in 2020.

Image: Christian Braga/Greenpeace.

Extreme heat waves are a taste of what's to come under a changing climate

A new study suggests that record-shattering heat events will become more frequent and more intense as the world continues to warm due to human-induced climate change, writes **Elizabeth Claire Alberts**, [Mongabay.com](https://www.mongabay.com)

In late June, Portland, Oregon, experienced its hottest day on record, reaching 42° Celsius (108° Fahrenheit). The last time it had been this hot was in 1981, when temperatures soared to 41°C (107°F). The very next day, the record was broken again, but this time by an even higher margin at 44°C (112°F).

Other parts of the Pacific Northwest roasted and broiled as well. On June 30, the town of

BANKS PREPARE FOR CLIMATE RISK MANAGEMENT

New guidelines from the Hong Kong Monetary Authority suggest that climate risk assessment will be a wide-ranging exercise, writes **John Sayer**

Financial regulators in Hong Kong have been working through the months of the pandemic on measures that prepare the finance sector for events which many believe represent much greater economic risk: climate change. It is reassuring to know that it did not take the recent fires in Siberia and the United States or the sudden and severe floods in Europe, India, Africa and China to spur them to action.

Before these most recent manifestations of climate change, consultations and drafting of climate risk management frameworks have continued within the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) and the Securities and Futures Commission.

The HKMA released the Climate Risk Management section of its Supervisory Policy Manual in July.

One important headline indicates that all the Authorised Institutions (AIs) under HKMA supervision (banks and money lenders) are expected to prepare climate-related



Climate risk management cannot be compartmentalised in one corner of a bank, but rather, it is a cross-cutting issue affecting all levels.

disclosures as soon as possible, and no later than mid-2023.

The HKMA knows this represents a tough call, so fully aligning disclosures with the Task Force on Climate Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) framework will be expected no later than 2025.

The guidance makes it clear HKMA is not expecting a superficial compliance exercise. They are calling for a comprehensive examination of how climate risk may affect banks' operations and may impact more traditional measures related to credit, liquidity, market, operational, reputational, strategic and legal risks.

The HKMA goes into some detail about how climate risk should be

governed and managed, how client risk should be assessed, internal operations prepared, scenarios analysed, stress tests adapted to cover climate risk, and how monitoring should include keeping abreast of the big issues related to climate change. The HKMA warns banks that climate change impact could be much larger, more widespread and diverse than other structural changes, and the complex interaction between climate and social, economic, technological and regulatory systems presents significant challenges to risk identification, measurement and strategies.

Banks have legal obligations to monitor risks and conduct business with integrity, prudence and