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Police said the MLAs were detained as they tried to protest despite being denied permission.

Womenia

TWEET PATROL


KRITI SANON
@KRITISANON

I wanna open every knot
Of who i "should" be
So i can elongate the rope
Fly up higher
And discover who i "could" be.
—Kriti
#SanonScribbles #PoetryWithKriti



A STEP TOWARDS VEGANISM



TEJAL SINHA

As more and more consumers choose to live a healthier lifestyle, the demand for fitness and protein supplements are going to exponentially increase in number, without any roadblocks. With Make in India, all its products are Vegan (90%) and rest (10%) vegetarian. Fitspire is an endeavor to grant its pre-eminent status in the field of health, fitness, activeness, agility, and well-being. It has wellness products for all demographics, the product lines include Sports, Health, Personal, and Child wellness suitable for all age groups and needs.

With the day to day challenges people often fail to consume proper nutrients, which eventually leads to common lifestyle diseases. To inspire people with a healthy lifestyle Fitspire is focused on delivering genuine, authentic, validated premium products for all age groups.

Nidhi Jain, Co-Founder Fitspire India's premium vegan and vegetarian health wellness brand shares, "Fitspire- aspire to fitness is an establishment that renders high graded, 100% vegan and vegetarian healthcare products to promote a better, healthier and nutritious lifestyle that are accessible, affordable to all. Nutritional gap that our nation is facing which takes the lives of many people daily inspired me to begin this healthcare startup-Fitspire. I wanted to empower people and help

others in my shoes. Our mission is to spread awareness about veganism and vegetarianism, aspire nation towards fitness and inculcate them around."

Fitspire wants its customers and consumers to embrace a way of living healthy and further create a path to empower women and make everyone aatmanirbhar to fit. Night shares, "Before starting this journey of Fitspire, me and my team researched, did many surveys and came to the conclusion that India needs to have a strong foundation related to healthcare products. Nowadays new formulations of healthcare supplements and competitions in various segments are emerging which offer an ideal ground for the nation to think before buying any product. This was a major challenge for Fitspire and team."

We live in a non-vegan world, but things are changing rapidly. We have more people consuming vegan food and supplements. Moreover, have a wide range of people coming in and embracing this lifestyle and its benefits. We all have become



increasingly mindful of our health, health and well-being of our family and that of our mother earth. Being mindful of how we eat and live has become a priority in today's world and we're reshaping how we shop, cook and eat.

Veganism as a lifestyle can go a long track. Adopting a vegan lifestyle not only has personal health benefits, it also helps our mother earth. It has been found that cutting animal products and bi products from your lifestyle. Not just this, veganism also contributes towards nature

in terms of reducing emissions into the environment. Make up your mind before changing your lifestyle and remain genuine to your decision. Vegan diet limits the intake and use of all animal products and bi products is believed to be the most environment friendly among all trendy diets. It could be as sustainable as promised because production of animal products and bi products does produce a large percentage of greenhouse gases responsible for the climatic crisis happening globally while on the other aspect vegan diet is sustainable and beneficial for wellbeing as well as environment.

"Whenever the world comes out of this coronavirus crisis, one thing is for sure is that people's attitude towards many things will change, especially the food that they consume. The connection between COVID-19 and animal consumption has triggered people's mind worldwide. This will bound to make people more careful, smart and understandable towards going vegan. However, chances of people accepting veganism are still far-fetched, especially in our country India. This pandemic has impacted Fitspire positively as we have researched and launched products according to the need and requirement of the nation. Our market strategy and consumer needs have refined positively though this crisis has shaken the world. We are even planning to launch a few more products further demanded by our customers," concludes Nidhi.



SUJATA ASSOMULL

We usually reserve our most glamorous outfits for this time of the year, as you can get away with literally dressing like Christmas bauble. It is as they say "the most wonderful time of the year," and for fashion that translates to bling it out.

Not this year though; there will be no big blow out bashes on New Year's Eve and Christmas Week parties will most likely be about socially distanced sit-down dinners with family and close friends. (If you are sensible). But you still need to dress up—it is Christmas after all.

A beautiful dinner deserves to be accompanied by beautiful clothes. Perhaps take a leaf out of the Crawley family's fashion book (yes, I am referring to Downton Abbey) and remember dinner is an occasion one should dress up for. Of course you can leave the tiara—we do need to be sensitive to the times we live in too.

It is an elegant festive feel we want this year—(if there was one dress code I have never been able to decode it's

New rules of Christmas dinner dressing

What will dressing for the holiday season be about this year?

the semi-formal one). The fail-safe option is a smart LBD, a pair of heels, some statement jewelry and a clutch (and with not being able to carry our bags for most of this year do make them super-sized-- think Bottega Veneta Pouch).

The look is accessorised with the Bengal Tiger earrings, all from Sabyasachi. But with it being the holiday season, black can be a little somber for this time of the year. Red and green (yes I know they say should never be seen together, but rules are made to be broken) are the traditional colours, and

I have always turned to jewel tones this time of year: amethyst purple, sapphire blue, ruby red and emerald green.

Fabrics can be more decadent—like a silk velvet or a duchess satin, they have a sheen that spells festivity and yet is very understated. (One dress I have my eye on is Saloni's velvet deep green bow dress. The designer, Saloni Lodha is London based but was born in Nashik and retails from most well-known luxury e-tail sites.)

Dresses at dinner parties need to be "sitting friendly"—so not too short and not too low cut. When it comes

to sleeves while there are a lot of butterfly and kimono sleeves in fashion right now you don't want your cuff to fall into the gravy boat by mistake. Since you will be seated—rather like dressing for a zoom call, it is about waist up dressing. A statement piece of jewelry always adds to the look, be it a cocktail ring, a great pair of hoops or a stand out necklace. It is okay to jingle a bit at this time of year.

If you are not a dress girl, the tuxedo style jacket and trousers is a very fashion forward option. Also if you want to inject some desi magic (this is the year to be vocal for local) to your festive style, brocade jackets are always a glam yet sophisticated choice. Suket Dhir has a few options. Or if you have a good tailor and a jacket with a shape you like—just dupe the piece in a brocade.

But if all this just sounds too dressed up—there is always the kaftan dress option especially if you are one of lucky ones escaping to Goa, Maldives or some other beach resort. Remember traditionally December is the month of "Cruise" in fashion—as it is when high fashion labels drop their resort lines. From Masaba Gupta's quirky and easy take on the kaftan to Payal Singhal's more tailored tasseled and embroidered kaftans—jet-setters have always known that a kaftan can take you from the ballroom to the beach. In this year—where the kaftan has become the robe of the pandemic, why not end the year wearing this billowing, bohemian and beautiful silhouette?

For healthy winter skin

To appreciate the beauty of a snowflake, it is necessary to stand out in the cold. True that! Winter has its own charm. But have you ever realised the havoc it could wreak on your skin? The cold air robs the natural moisture from your skin, leaving it dry and itchy. It can even cause severe dry skin, eczema, and psoriasis. That's why you need to take care of it. Here are some tips for you.



Use lukewarm water

It is very tempting to go for hot showers when the temperature is dipping. But if you love your

skin, avoid them. Instead, use lukewarm water to shower and wash your face. Hot showers dry your skin quickly, and if you do not moisturise it immediately, your skin can develop cracks and winter eczema. Once you have

as a result, water evaporates from your body easily. Hence, you need to keep your skin hydrated. You can also install a humidifier to manage the moisture level in your home. This will certainly keep your skin happy.

Stay hydrated

Be it inside your home or outside, the air is drier in winter. And

Choose skin care products wisely

What kept your skin happy during summers can make it sad during winters. And that's why you need to change your skin care products accordingly. The key to healthy and glowing winter skin is using mild skin care products. Choose cleansers that contain moisturisers to avoid stripping your skin of its natural moisture barrier. If you have acne or breakouts, use products containing ceramides, hyaluronic acid, hydration serums, and glycerin to help in repairing the moisture barrier of your skin. Avoid masks and peels, astringent lotions, and any product that contains alcohol as they make your skin dry during the winter.

Protect your skin

You need to protect your skin from the cold wind or snow or rain if you are stepping out in winter. So, wear gloves and caps and do not forget your sunscreen lotion. The warm sun rays feel pleasant, but the UV rays can still damage your skin a lot. Choose a sunscreen that has titanium dioxide or zinc oxide.

Do not exfoliate your skin a lot

Exfoliating the skin helps in getting rid of dead cells. You have to be careful during winters because your skin barrier is already compromised due to the dry and cold weather. Exfoliating your skin once a week is fine—this helps in boosting skin regeneration and better product absorption. Also, you should ex-

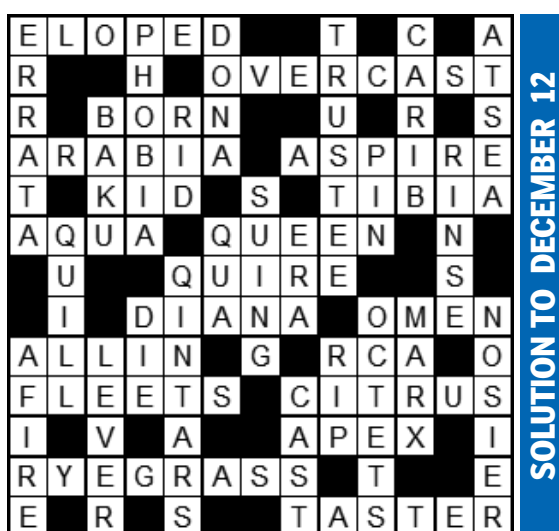
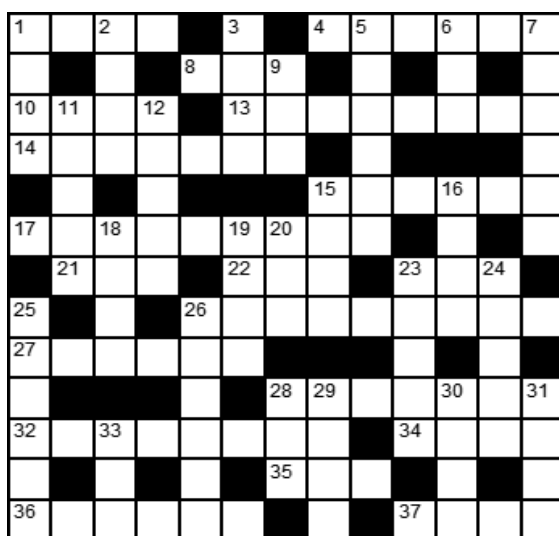
foliate depending on your skin type. If you have very dry skin, exfoliate your skin lightly. If you have combination and oily skin, once a week is fine.

Don't forget the hands

The skin on your hands has fewer oil glands as compared to the skin on any other body part. That's why moisture escapes from your hands quickly, making them prone to cracks and itchiness. Apply a moisturiser before you go out.

Care for your feet

Choose glycerin-based creams and petroleum jelly to moisturise your feet. Also, make sure you exfoliate the skin on your feet occasionally so that it can absorb the moisturiser easily.



SOLUTION TO DECEMBER 12

CROSSWORD

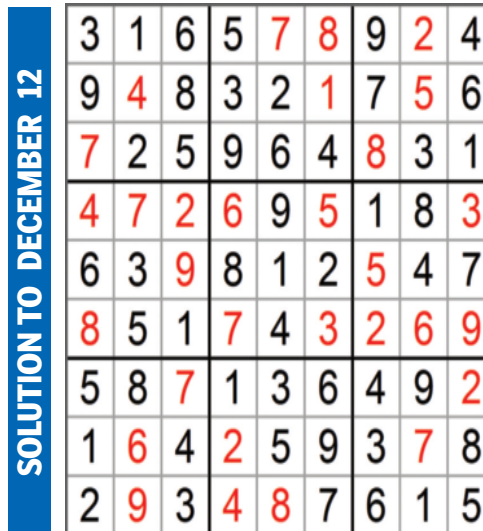
Across

- 1 Dip into coffee (4)
- 4 Nepalese porter (6)
- 8 Cheer (3)
- 10 Cool type of music (4)
- 13 Remittances ? (8)
- 14 Turns a certain way (7)
- 15 Light meals (6)
- 17 Acquaint (9)
- 21 Puzzle solver's cry (3)
- 22 North American nation (3)
- 23 Curve (3)
- 26 Uncompounded (9)
- 27 Confirm (6)
- 28 Ideal future husband (2,5)
- 32 Jumping marsupial (8)
- 34 A place stead (4)
- 35 Swamp or morass (3)
- 36 Moral or legal obligations (6)
- 37 Needle-case (4)

Down

- 1 Martial arts school (4)
- 2 Hitler follower (4)
- 3 Absorbed and enchanted (4)
- 5 Merciful (6)
- 6 Flee (3)
- 7 Give aid to (6)
- 9 Possesses (3)
- 11 Sphere of action (5)
- 12 Striped animal (5)
- 15 Rip-off, swindle or con ? (4)
- 16 Rudely brief (4)
- 18 Norse deity (4)
- 19 At the right time (4)
- 20 ___ up : exhaust with overwork ? (3)
- 23 Blacksmith item (5)
- 24 Hoard (5)
- 25 Elicited, evinced or extracted (6)
- 26 Erase (6)
- 28 Crowd (3)
- 29 Chess piece (4)
- 30 Essential point (4)
- 31 Amazon valley people (4)
- 33 Egg of a louse (3)

SUDOKU



SOLUTION TO DECEMBER 12

NEWS ROUNDUP

Shilpa Shetty reveals her favourite Christmas tradition

Bollywood actress Shilpa Shetty has started prepping her home for Christmas! Shilpa revealed on Sunday that decorating the Christmas tree together with son Viaan is her favourite Christmas tradition.

Shilpa shared a Boomerang video on her verified Instagram account on Sunday where her eight-year-old son Viaan can be seen biting a candy cane while she stares at him in surprise.

"Viaan thought the candy cane was yum, Whoever said it was easy being a mum, Decorating the tree together is our favourite tradition; T'is the time to be jolly... fa la la la... la la la la..." the actress wrote on Instagram.

On the work front, Shilpa is all set to return to the screen after 13 years with two releases, "Hungama 2" and "Nikamma".



Directed by Sabbir Khan, the action-packed romantic comedy film "Nikamma" also features Abhimanyu Dasani and Shirley Setia.

"Hungama 2" also stars Paresh Rawal, Pranitha Subhash and Meezan. The film is a follow-up of Priyadarshan's 2003 slapstick hit, "Hungama".

‘PIZZA LANGAR’ AT FARMERS’ PROTEST

Those who give dough can also have pizzas, say organisers

GAURAV SAINI
NEW DELHI

A group of five friends set out from Amritsar on a cold Saturday morning. They didn’t have much time to organise a regular langar, so they collected ‘regular-sized’ pizzas from a Haryana mall and set up a stall at the Singhu border. Around 400 pizzas were distributed within minutes as a huge crowd, including the protesting peasants and residents from nearby areas, queued up.

The ‘pizza langar’ has since hogged headlines and garnered compliments from different quarters, and also brickbats from a certain section. “The farmers who gave the dough for

pizzas can also afford to have one themselves,” says Shanbir Singh Sandhu, who organised the ‘pizza langar’ with his four friends for the peasants protesting at the Delhi-Haryana border against the contentious agri-marketing laws.

“We didn’t have much time to organise a regular lentils-chapati langar.... So we came up with this idea,” says Sandhu, who is himself a farmer and an economics student at Guru Nanak Dev University in Amritsar.

The farmers have been protesting at several border points into Delhi for over two weeks over their demands to repeal the new legislations, which they claim would benefit the corporates, and end the traditional wholesale



markets and the minimum support price regime. Sandhu’s friend, Shahnaz Gill, underscored that people get bored eating the same thing everyday. “We thought we should bring them (farmers) something else to keep their spirits up,” he said.

The 21-year-old student of agriculture says this is first time they have organised a ‘pizza langar’, expressing happiness that people have appreciated their efforts. However, Sandhu says it is unfortunate and totally unacceptable that some people were ridiculing farmers having pizzas.

“Few people just cannot digest that a farmer can have a car, wear good clothes and have a pizza. The farmer has moved on from dhoti-

kurta to jeans and T-shirt,” the 25-year-old student says. “It’s about time these people grew up.” One of the reasons for organising a ‘pizza langar’ was to change the public perception about farmers, he adds. Gill says no one has the right to comment on what a farmer should eat or wear. “People have been calling us ‘so-called farmers’. Before making any such comment, they should come and meet us first, he says.

“They will get to know that our thinking is much better than theirs.” The five friends have decided to organise another such langar, which they say will be better and bigger. It can be pizza or burger or something else, too, Sandhu says.

Farmers’ stir: Jamia students asked to leave

‘Will fight our own battle’

Clarify remarks of Union Ministers Goyal, Danve: NCP to PM Modi

Sena MP Raut tells BJP to conduct surgical strikes on Goyal, Danve

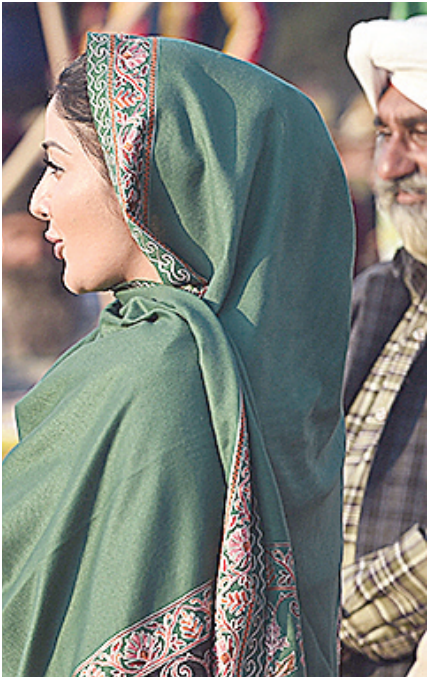
NEW DELHI/MUMBAI

A small group of Jamia Millia Islamia students who reached the Ghazipur entry point on the Delhi-Uttar Pradesh border on Sunday afternoon to extend support to farmers were asked to leave by the protesters.

As the group of students, including 4 to 5 young women, reached the rally spot, the farmers lodged a protest over their presence. As the situation slightly tensed up, police intervened.

Arjun, one of the protesters present on the spot, told IANS: “A few students from Jamia visited the border spot to support the farmers and brought along a ‘daphli’ (tambourine) and a couple of posters in hands. The farmers drove them away. We will fight our own battle. We don’t need anybody who wants to break up India.” The NCP said PM Modi should clarify on the claims of some Union ministers that the ongoing farmers’ protest against the new agri laws has the backing of Pakistan, China and Maoists. NCP spokesman Mahesh Tapase said instead of sympathetically considering demands of the protesting farmers, Union ministers Raosaheb Danve and Piyush Goyal have made “controversial remarks to discredit the agitation”.

Goyal on Saturday said the agitation no



Punjabi singer Sonia Mann during her visit to Ghazipur border to support farmers protesting against Centre's farm reform laws, in Ghaziabad, on Sunday

longer remains a farmers’ movement as it has been “infiltrated by Leftist and Maoist elements” demanding the release of those put behind bars for “anti-national activities”. This was clearly to derail agriculture reforms brought by the government, he said. Danve recently stirred a controversy with his remarks that China and Pakistan were behind the protests being staged by cultivators, inviting sharp reactions from various quarters.

Taking a dig at the BJP on Danve’s remarks, Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut has asked the Centre to conduct a “surgical strike”. Seeking to distance the BJP from Danve’s remarks, Union minister and RPI (A) leader Ramdas Athawale told reporters in Nagpur that Danve’s claim of China and Pakistan being behind the farmers’ protest is “not the government’s stand”.

Athawale said it was important to inquire if such people, who have no relation with the farmers’ protest, have joined the protesters. He said the farmers and government should take two steps back and then try to move ahead on the issue. “Senior Congress leader P Chidambaram has slammed the Centre on the linking of farmers’ protest with Khalistan and Maoist elements and questioned that if it were so why was the government holding talks with protesters.



Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) leaders being rescued after a 'shikara' carrying BJP workers capsized in Dal Lake during an election rally, in Srinagar on Sunday

Shikara carrying BJP workers capsize

SRINAGAR

A shikara, carrying BJP workers and mediapersons, capsized in the Dal Lake on Sunday during campaign for the ongoing District Development Council elections, officials said here.

The shikara capsized when it was closing on the bank of the lake in the last leg of the rally. The BJP workers and journalists were rescued by locals, State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) personnel

and police. The shikara rally was led by Union minister Anurag Thakur, who is the BJP’s in-charge for DDC elections in Jammu and Kashmir. Tarun Chug and Shah-nawaz Hussain were also present in the rally.

The sixth phase of DDC elections witnessed 42.79 per cent voter turnout till 1 pm across 31 constituencies in 18 districts, officials said.

The polling has been smooth in the union territory so far with no

untoward incident being reported from anywhere, they said. Rajouri district in Jammu has recorded the highest voter turnout of 63.07 per cent so far, while Shopian district in south Kashmir the lowest at a meagre 3.66 per cent, the officials said. As per the figures released by the office of the State Election Commissioner, Jammu Division recorded 56.90 per cent voting, while Kashmir Division registered an overall polling percentage of 26.28 per cent up to 1 pm.

Kamal Haasan questions PM Modi

Why new Parliament when half of India is hungry?

CHENNAI

MNM chief Kamal Haasan on Sunday demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi spell out the rationale behind constructing a new Parliament building for about Rs 1,000 crore “when half of India is hungry due to coronavirus pandemic triggered loss of livelihoods”.

Seeking to liken the proposed construction of the new edifice to the centuries old Great Wall of China, he claimed that ‘thousands of people perished’ during its construction, but the dragon nation rulers said the wall was to ‘guard’ the people.

“To protect whom is a new Parliament building being constructed at a cost of Rs 1,000 crore when half of India is hungry due to the coronavirus pandemic triggered loss of livelihoods,” the Makkal Needhi Maiam leader asked in a tweet.

‘Answer honourable elected Prime Minister,’ he said hours before kick starting the first phase of his campaign for the Assembly polls from Madurai



in southern Tamil Nadu. Assembly elections are due during April-May 2021 in Tamil Nadu.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for a new Parliament building on December 10. He also performed the ground-breaking ceremony for the structure, which is expected to be completed by 2022.

Speaking to reporters before leaving for the temple town, Haasan alleged that the authorities had at the last minute not granted permission for MNM to campaign within urban areas, though they had got the nod to go ahead in ‘many places’.

Asked about the focus of his party’s campaign, he said would be ushering in a complete transformation in Tamil Nadu.

“There is no doubt about degeneration in the state... people know that well and there is no point lamenting. MNM will talk about what needs to be done now,” he said, apparently targeting the two Dravidian parties, AIADMK and DMK, who have in turn ruled the state since 1967.



Republic TV CEO held, in police custody till tomorrow

MUMBAI

REPUBLIC TV CEO Vikas Khanchandani was arrested on Sunday morning in connection with the ongoing probe into the TRP scam, and sent to police custody till December 15, officials said.

Shortly after the remand order by the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate’s court, the Republic TV - which has alleged since morning that the arrest was illegal - asserted that the company will challenge it in the Bombay High Court immediately. Khanchandani was nabbed early on Sunday by the Special Investigation Team of Mumbai Police, making him the 13th person to be arrested till date.

During the court hearing, the police sought 14 days custody, saying the accused had the knowledge and was a beneficiary of the crime.

However, as Khanchandani’s lawyers argued that the police were ‘hounding’ the TV channel after its coverage of the Palghar lynching case (April 2020), the court granted two days custody.

Soon after Khanchandani’s arrest, the Republic TV initiated a campaign demanding his release.

The channel said: “Republic TV issues national appeal for courts to intervene to stop attacks on an independent news organization” with a hashtag, #FreeRepublicCEONow.

Nadda tests positive for Covid-19, self-isolates

NEW DELHI

THE BJP president JP Nadda said on Sunday he has tested positive for the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) and that he has been following all the guidelines for home isolation.

“I got the test done after experiencing the initial symptoms of corona and the report came back positive. My health is fine and I have been following all the guidelines for home isolation on the advice of doctors. I request everyone who has come in contact with me in the last few days to please isolate yourself and get yourself checked,” Nadda tweeted in Hindi.

India’s Covid-19 caseload rose to 98.57 lakh, while the number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 93.57 lakh pushing the national recovery rate to 94.93 per cent, according to the Union Health Ministry data up-

dated on Sunday.

The total coronavirus cases mounted to 98,57,029 with 30,254 infections being reported in a day. The death toll rose to 1,43,019 with 391 new fatalities, the data updated at 8 am showed.

Meanwhile, Russia’s Sputnik V vaccine is likely to offer two-year-long protection against Covid-19, Alexander Gintsburg, the head of the vaccine’s developer, Gamaleya National Research Center for Epidemiology and Microbiology, has claimed.

“So far, I can only make suggestions, because more experimental data is needed. Our vaccine was created on the platform also used for the Ebola vaccine,” he was quoted as saying to the Soloviev Live channel on YouTube by TASS News Agency on Saturday.

“Experimental data received at that point demonstrate that a similar vaccine would offer protection for two years, maybe more.”



2 terrorists killed in encounter

JAMMU

TWO terrorists were killed and their associate arrested in a joint operation by security forces on Sunday at Poshana in Jammu and Kashmir’s Poonch district, officials said.

“Two terrorists were killed and one associate of theirs arrested in Poshana area the Jammu and Kashmir Police, Army and CRPF,” police said.

The gun battle started as security forces cordoned off the area and launched a search operation on the basis of specific information about the presence of terrorists in the area. Sources said that a group of terrorists had recently infiltrated India from Pakistan and headed to south Kashmir’s Shopian district. The sources said Pakistan was sending terrorists to Kashmir to disturb the ongoing District Development Council elections.

Mother, daughter tie the knot at same wedding ceremony

GORAKHPUR

In a unique event, a 53-year-old mother and her 27-year-old daughter tied the knot at a mass wedding ceremony held under Mukhyamantri Samuhik Vivah Yojna in Gorakhpur.

The woman, Beli Devi, whose husband Harihar died 25 years ago, married her husband’s younger brother Jagdish, 55, at the ceremony where 63 couples, including a Muslim couple, tied the knot.

Beli Devi’s youngest daughter, Indu, also got married in the same ceremony that took place last week. Jagdish is a farmer and was unmarried till now.

“My two sons and two daughters are already married so with the marriage of my youngest daughter, I decided to marry my brother-in-law. All my children are happy,” Beli Devi told reporters. Indu was married to 29-year-old Rahul.

“My mother and uncle took care of us and I am very happy that now they will look after each other,” said Indu.

Senior district officials were present at the mass wedding event.

2,000-year-old coins found in Uttar Pradesh village

A total of 128 old coins and remains of statues and utensils were recovered by villagers while digging the earth in Mohammadabad Gohna tehsil on Saturday, District Magistrate Amit Kumar Bansal said.

He said the coins appear to be 1500 to 2000 years old. On being informed by the villagers, all the things were taken into custody by the administration, the DM said.

The archaeological directorate has been in-



formed and the administration has taken control of the area from where these things have been found.

Meanwhile, police in Uttar Pradesh’s Gonda district have busted a gang involved in stealing idols from temples and arrested seven accused,

officials said on Sunday.

An ‘ashtadhatu’ (alloy of eight metals, including gold) idol worth Rs 5 crore in the international market has been recovered from them, police said. Additional Superintendent of Police Mahendra Kumar said a joint team of police,

SWAT and surveillance unit arrested six people on Saturday night, when they were going to Ram Janki temple in Satnami Purva.

On interrogation, the suspects said they were planning to steal idols from a temple in Gonda, and from another one in Siddharthnagar, Kumar said.

The arrested accused Raj Kumar and Ajitesh Kumar told police about Javed, from whom an ‘ashtadhatu’ idol was recovered, the Additional SP said, adding Javed has also been held. The ‘ashtadhatu’ idol was recovered from Javed, he said. A case has been registered against the accused, police said.

In another incident from UP, a 55-year-old man was allegedly killed by his wife and elder daughter-in-law in a village in Bhadohi district of Uttar Pradesh for having an illicit relation with his younger daughter-in-law, police said on Sunday.

Agitating farmers show us nobility of protest

From freedom struggle to the agitation for separate Telangana State, the country has seen many an agitation. In the post-Independence era, most of the agitations were political in nature and were led by different parties or group of parties. These agitations, many times, had seen violence as well. But the present agitation of Indian farmers, to be more specific the farmers from North India is something which would go down in the history as one of the best and most organised agitation. The farmers who are backbone of our nation have demonstrated that how an agitation can be peaceful, well organised and can be effective enough to make the government examine

their demands. The best part is that they have not allowed any political party to poke their nose or even finger in the agitation. Let us not get into the merits or demerits of the three farm laws. The government says these laws would benefit the farmers and the farmers argue that they are black laws but just examine how the farmers have organised the agitation. The site where they have laid siege to Delhi is nothing short of a rustic township spread in about 10 kms. You can see horses with stocks of feed. There are bullocks and stocks of dry grass. There are proper tents with beddings. There are desi geysers lined up for hot water so that the farmers can take bath. There are washing machines to wash clothes. And the best part of it is 'Langar' which is nothing but a community kitchen where everyone participates in cooking food and serving them to the agitating farmers, the security personnel on duty and all those who go there to extend solidarity with them. Even mouth-watering Jalebi, hot tea in 'Kulhads' (cups made of clay) with

biscuits are served to anyone present there. To boost the immunity levels, dry fruits are being distributed. There are special stalls for distributing medicines and even chappals are available for those who are in need. You tell your foot size and you can get a pair of chappals. What's more, some philanthropists have even set up a stall where foot massagers have been installed so that the farmers who come back after a daylong agitation can get their feet massaged. Ask anyone what the aim of the agitation is, the simple answer is repeal the three farm acts. They have their own argument and logic. What needs to be admired is the discipline they have displayed so far and the way they had organised the agitation. Hats off to the farmers. Unfortunately, the media which of late seems to be turning myopic is more concerned about who is funding them. The same media never raised this question when Langar's were organised when coronavirus was at its peak and thousands of migrant labour were walking home.

India needs more than laws to stamp out farm fires

POORNIMA ADVANI



THE Indian capital Delhi's air pollution has turned from low to severe over the course of the Diwali weekend due to burning of crop stubbles in nearby states and people bursting crackers in violation of a Delhi state government ban.

While the festival of lights inevitably brings the problem of smoke and ash spewed by crackers, the bigger worry is that of farm fires - a phenomenon that has been gradually choking the national capital even though the vehicle load has somewhat eased because of Covid-19. The problem of crop stubble burning is hurting our society in multiple ways. It virtually buries Delhi under a cloud of haze every year, as well as destroys beneficial soil bacteria. Thousands of tons of paddy straw, convertible to green fuels or manure, simply go up in smoke.

The recurring administrative paralysis has now put the ball in the Supreme Court's domain. Indeed, this is one situation that requires wisdom, sagacity and stringent action for the benefit of society. Burning crop residue is a crime under Section 188 of the Indian Penal Code and the Air and Pollution Control Act of 1981. On December 10, 2015, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) had banned crop residue burning in the states of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab where the practice is prevalent.

It has also warned that their entire administrative and police hierarchy, from the Chief Secretary to the sarpanch to the local policeman, will be held responsible even if one instance of stubble burning occurs in the future.

The apex court held State governments responsible for stubble burning and said that instances of stubble burning would be penalised. It has made the local and civic bodies as "personally responsible" as the errant farmer who puts fire to his crop residue, putting in effect the 'Polluter Pays Principle.'

But wielding the stick alone won't work. Only this week, the number of farm fire incidents in Punjab crossed an all-time high of 73,000. That too, within days of First Information Reports being lodged against farmers and arrests being made in adjoining states of Delhi. A solution to this complicated rigmarole requires, besides political will, sincerity and earnestness for the sake of everybody's health.

What prompts farmers to burn their rice stubble in northern India? A combine 'harvester and thresher' used in harvest of paddy, the machine leaves behind a significant length of straw and stubble on the field. This straw, lying on the field, comprises the stalk and the leaves of the crop with limited nutrients. It is reported that is September-October each year, farmers burn an estimated 35 million tons of crop waste from their paddy fields as a low-cost straw disposal practice.



With often only a couple of weeks gone between the rice-harvesting season and the start of wheat-sowing, farmers burn the debris to clear the field quickly for the new crop. For them, every day matters. The apex court has realised that regulatory action won't be enough to resolve the problem. After all, the majority of our farmers are small and marginal, who struggle to employ farm machines needed for sowing, let alone afford equipment required to clear stubble from their fields.

In its wisdom, therefore the court has directed that a sum of Rs 100 per 100 kilograms (quintal) be provided, especially to small and marginal farmers, along with farm machinery free of cost to prevent them from burning the stubble.

However, such a measure would amount to states having to pay Rs 2,000/acre to support such operations besides the additional cost of providing the machines. Moreover, the 2-4 weeks' time window available between harvest of the summer crop and sowing of the winter varieties presents a time challenge. The result is that no State has embraced the proposal earnestly.

Delhi State Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has expressed the hope that a new technology developed by the Indian Institute of Technology to spray a chemical that will convert the leftover crop into manure might provide the solution. Other scientific solutions can be used productively as well. For example, conversion of rice straw into bricks or blocks for use as biogas or ethanol which can substitute pollution-causing petrol and diesel.

It is here that a robust enforcement mechanism, well regulated, under the central government can go a long way. Earlier this month, the central government introduced a new law through an ordinance to curb air pollution in the Delhi-NCR region. The new law dissolved the Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA) and instead set up a commission with over 20 members.

It also says that "any non-compliance or contravention of any provisions/rules or order/direction of the Commission will be an offence punishable with a jail term up to five years or with fine up to Rs one crore or with both." This will apply to the red zone for stubble burning -- Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh apart from the Delhi-NCR region.

However, matters related to agriculture are not only sensitive but also complicated. With farmers comprising the country's largest workforce spread across thousands of farms dotting the countryside, the job of policing them becomes all the more complex. Under the Indian Constitution, agriculture falls in the concurrent list, which means neither the central government nor state government can regulate this completely.

The Central government is due to submit another report to the Supreme Court to outline the proposed measures to stop stubble burning. Still, the bottom line is that New Delhi will need the support and cooperation of adjoining states for addressing the problem.

Given the dynamics, the only practical solution can be when both farmers and their State governments respectively see a sufficiently strong financial motivation. World over green fuels are catching on as geographies such as the European Union and Japan are moving towards zero-emission.

India is sitting on a potential goldmine. Thousands of tons of paddy straw can be converted into green fuels like ethanol or even compressed natural gas. Of course, such a solution will require a chain of supportive infrastructure such as warehousing to store the paddy straw bales as well as sufficient processing capacity for their conversion into fuel.

Equally importantly, India will need to set up an efficient logistics system for collection of the paddy straw from the farmers and transporting them to storage hubs. This will not be an easy challenge. However, given that the Food Corporation of India already has the storage infrastructure for wheat, rice and other crops for which it pays a minimum support price, the state machinery should be able to cope with this demand.

Such an initiative will be timely as the government is keen to boost its ethanol blending program, which currently stands at 5% compared to a targeted 10% for petrol. While it may take time to implement this fully, the program can go a long way in trimming India's bloated crude oil import bill.

The problem of farm fires has again underscored the need for better technology for our rural sector. Drone technology has already rescued a swathe of northern India in combating the menace of locusts. Speeding up of the draft rules can go a long way in detecting and fighting stubble burning.

Moreover, effective digitisation can make the task of spreading awareness among farmers that much easier. In essence, the means are very much at hand, if the will is there. Since India has pledged to drive down its emission intensity as part of the Paris Climate Change accord, it is hoped that robust regulation and scientific solution would drive in a new era in handling stubble burning- sooner than later.

(The writer is former chairperson of National Commission for Women, and runs a legal firm called The Law Point. The views expressed are personal.)

THE WAY AHEAD



Dr Bharat Jhunjunwala

A report of McKinsey Global Institute says that there is a shortage of 8.5 crore skilled workers having higher secondary education and above in the developed countries; while there is an excess of 9.5 crore

unskilled workers having primary education in the developed and developing countries. Obviously, therefore, we can become suppliers of skilled workers to the world if we can impart the required skills to the large numbers of unskilled workers having primary education in our country. The ground reality, however, is desperate. S Srinivasan, President of Indian Institute of Welding, tells us that at least 10,000 welders have been imported into India from China, Russia and East European countries to meet the shortage of welders in India. On the one hand, we are thinking of becoming skill suppliers to the world; on the other, we are unable to even meet our own needs of simple skills such as that of welders.

A 2008 report of the World Bank throws light on the disconnect between "education" and "skill" in India. A survey of primary schools in Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh found that the teachers were often not present. And, there was little improvement in the educational attainments even if their presence improved. The report notes that there is lack of motivation among the teachers. The teachers can be made to be present but cannot be made to teach just as one can take the horse to the water but cannot make it drink. The World Bank found that making the teachers accountable to the local Panchayats did not make much difference. A Block President from Utarakhand told me that even the Secretary to the Block Panchayat did not act as per the directions of the elected President. The Secretary followed the orders of the IAS officers to the neglect of the orders of the elected President. Therefore, making the teachers "accountable" to the Panchayat without giving the Panchayats the power to appoint and remove the teachers will be ineffective.

The Ministry of Education (MOE) has promulgated a New Education Policy to repair the situation. A programme named "Equip" or "Education Quality Upgradation and Inclusion Programme" has been launched with the objective to equip the students to capture the emerging opportunities by skilling them. However, six of the ten points in this programme are mere slogans: (1) Towards global best teaching process; (2) Promoting excellence; (3) Assessment; (4) Accreditation and ranking systems; (5) Promotion of research and innovation; and (6) Employability and

entrepreneurship. Two points would provide more money to the existing inefficient teachers: (7) Strategies for expanding access; and (8) Financing higher education. The ninth point is "Using technology for better reach and internationalisation." The World Bank has already informed us that improving attendance of teachers by installing biometric attendance does not improve the standard of education. The same applies to newer technologies like smart classes and online learning. The tenth and the most important point is "Governance reforms." A close reading of the description says, "Introduce governance reforms in higher education for well-administered campuses." The governance reforms, therefore, are aimed to provide autonomy to well-run government educational institutions which is a step in the right direction. However, that does nothing to help improve the skills of our primary-secondary educated students like the welders that are required by the global economy.

The Prime Minister has created a separate Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), perhaps, to bypass the existing education establishment and find another route to skill India. However, the budget of MSDE was a meagre Rs 3k crore against the budget for Ministry of Education being Rs 99k crore in 2020-21. That is like dousing a forest fire with 3 buckets of water. Further, MSDE also is not interested in skilling welders. It is focused on high-end skilling. It has entered into agreements with Amazon, Google, Adani, Uber, Maruti and Microsoft, which is a good thing. But what about meeting the global shortage of the 8.5 crore jobs of nurses, teachers, physiotherapists, translators and the like? Perhaps the sons and daughters of the officers of the MSDE do not aspire to become welders; hence MSDE is focused on high-end skilling with Amazon and Microsoft. As the result, skill development is on the backburner.

Many countries across the world, and many States in our country have recognised that it is impossible to reform the government education system. They have made programmes to provide vouchers to the students with which the students can pay fees of the school of their choice. A study by Centre of Civil Society says that a specified amount out of the fee paid by students to school of their choice is reimbursed by the government in Hong Kong. A fee of Rs 550 to Rs 1,100 per month is paid directly by the government to the school of choice of the student in certain provinces of Pakistan. It was found here that the dropout rate reduced, and the learning of mathematics improved. Similar arrangement has been made in Philippines. Andhra Pradesh and Delhi Shahdara implemented similar programmes and found an improvement in teaching of English and mathematics. A similar programme in Odisha has led to in-



The Prime Minister has created a separate Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), perhaps, to bypass the existing education establishment and find another route to skill India. However, the budget of MSDE was a meagre Rs 3k crore against the budget for Ministry of Education being Rs 99k crore in 2020-21. That is like dousing a forest fire with 3 buckets of water. Further, MSDE also is not interested in skilling welders. It is focused on high-end skilling. It has entered into agreements with Amazon, Google, Adani, Uber, Maruti and Microsoft, which is a good thing. But what about meeting the global shortage of the 8.5 crore jobs of nurses, teachers, physiotherapists, translators and the like? Perhaps the sons and daughters of the officers of the MSDE do not aspire to become welders; hence MSDE is focused on high-end skilling with Amazon and Microsoft. As the result, skill development is on the backburner.

crease of passing student rate from 64 to 75 percent. These experiences indicate that the students are willing to learn if the teachers are willing to teach; and the teachers are willing to teach only if their salaries are somehow linked to their teaching performance. We can see before our eyes that private teachers drawing a salary of Rs 6,000 per month are getting better results than government teachers drawing a salary of Rs 60,000 per month. One reason of this differential is that no fee is to be paid in government schools hence poorer people send their children there while the better-off people send their children to private schools. Needless to say, the government schools will be absolved of this handicap in the voucher system because then the poor and rich students -- both will be equally enabled to enrol in gov-

ernment- or private schools.

Skilling our students requires a surgery of MOE. The government must reduce the budget of government schools by one-half and pay out the other half to the school of the choice of the student. The teachers will then take interest in teaching because they will not get the one-half pay out that will come through the student if they do not teach. The government teachers will also be saved from teaching only the poor students. Our Constitutional mandate of "Welfare State" will then be truly oriented to the welfare of the students and not the welfare of the teachers. Then we will be able to supply not only welders but also software programmers to the world.

(The writer is formerly Professor of Economics at IIM, Bengaluru)

Arrest fake doctors

THE very surprising fact is that there are hundreds of fake doctors found treating patients in various private hospitals and nursing homes. Even Ayush doctors are found working in some corporate hospitals which is illegal and highly objectionable. Knowing this, the government should act fast and arrest these fake doctors. Stringent action, along with huge penalties, must be imposed by the government on such doctors to win public confidence in private hospitals and nursing homes. Regular inspections are required to be held in all private hospitals by the government. Aiming to earn more by squeezing patients is not at all acceptable. They may also be reminded that medical profession is not a business.

D N Rao, Hyderabad

Centre's stand on family planning laudable

This is with reference to the report 'Can't coerce family planning, Centre tells SC' (Dec 13). The Central government has submitted an affidavit on Saturday in Supreme Court in a matter related to the petition regarding family planning. The Central government said no one can be forced regarding family planning and opposed the law which was declared it was mandatory to have only two babies. And the Central government declared that everyone can have more than two babies. The government said in the affidavit that whatever country implemented law for having only one baby, it has not faced anything but harm. Regarding family planning, every Indian has been given the right to control according to his situations.

Md Shahabuddin, Koderma, Jharkhand

is suffering from a normal fever has to spend nearly Rs 3,000 on lab charges which is six days' earnings for him. Doctor consultation fee in small towns is Rs 250. Besides this, medicines prescribed by them are available in their medical shops only which are more expensive. Hence, I appeal to all doctors to kindly pay attention on health of the common man not on his wealth.

A Vidyasagar Rao, Malkapur, Mahabubnagar dist.

Trap the man-eater as early as possible

WE all get scared even we hear the name of a tiger. But what about the people who are living near the forests? In Telangana, tigers are prevalent in Nirmal and Asifabad districts. Tigers are entering the districts from Maharashtra.

A tiger killed two people and a cow in Asifabad district recently. In a village in Bhadradi Kothagudem district, locals spotted a tiger. Forest Department officials need to catch the tiger. Otherwise, the tiger may kill more people and livestock. People are afraid to go outside alone. They also keep their cattle at home. They do not know when and where the tiger is coming from. Forest officials should be careful and catch the tiger soon as possible.

T V S Suchitra, Khammam

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LETTERS

Doctors should show kindness to poor patients

It is necessary to recall a doctor's treatment to the common fever was very simple in the 1990s. It was at the cost of Rs 200 which included medicine and his fee. There was no lab involvement to diagnose the illness, but the doctors were very particular in the observation of patient's physical, physiological and mental conditions, interaction with patient to find the reason for the illness. It was enough data to him to advise better medication to the patient for a period of three to five days, which was the suitable and best treatment to the patient with low cost. If the person was not cured, in the next visit doctor used to advise him for diagnostic tests for diseases like malaria, typhoid and the like depending on the symptoms of patient.

Based on above reports, the medication was given to cure illness. Nowadays doctors are not properly interacting with patients in order to understand the patient's health condition. Besides this, in the first visit itself, they are advising different types of tests. Now in Covid-19 pandemic conditions, corona test and buying Covid-19 kit are mandatory.

Out of these tests, one result might be positive and the remaining go negative. As the result, patient has to spend his money on diagnosis which is in addition to doctor's fee and medicines. The common man who

Pilgrim rush swells at Tirumala

HANS NEWS SERVICE
TIRUPATI

AS many as 38,516 pilgrims had darshan of Lord Venkateswara at Tirumala temple on Saturday.

The steady decline of corona cases nationwide coupled with the consecutive holidays due to Second Saturday and Sunday attracted more number of pilgrims to Tirumala.

The TTD on its part substantially increased the number of pilgrims being allowed for darshan by resuming many of the Arjitha (paid) Sevas with devotees' participation through virtual platforms.

On Saturday, the number of pilgrims who had tonsured their heads has increased to 14623, the highest so far while the cash offering in the Hundi was Rs 2.22 crore, according to a temple official.

First the TTD resumed Kalyantotsavam with devotees' virtual participation and later Sahasra Deepalakara Seva, Arjitha Brahmotsavam and Unjal Seva providing darshan facility to the ticketholders who can avail the facility within three months after the booking of the tickets, follow-



► No. of devotees visiting the hill shrine of Lord Venkateswara increases with the decline in Covid cases and consecutive holidays

► A record 38,516 pilgrims have darshan of the presiding deity at Tirumala on Saturday and the temple records Hundi cash offerings of Rs 2.22 crore

ing more and more relaxations announced by the Centre in the Covid norms.

Darshan which was resumed at Tirumala temple on June 12 this year after the relaxation of Covid restrictions allowing 6,000 pilgrims daily (Rs 300 special entry online tickets and offline Sarva Darshan tickets 3,000 each) but was gradually increased by TTD to cope with the heavy demand from devotees for darshan. Now 20,000 special en-

try tickets and 7,000 offline Sarva Darshan tickets are now being issued daily while a daily quota of 500 tickets each of Arjitha Brahmotsavam, Unjal Seva and SD Seva tickets also issued online in advance for the devotees for darshan increasing the total number of pilgrims allowed daily for darshan.

A TTD official said the Arjitha Seva ticket holders including Kalyanotsavam, SD Seva, Brahmotsavam and Unjal seva prefer-

ring to visit Tirumala for darshan during holidays taking advantage of the 90 days time allowed by the TTD for darshan after the advance booking of the seva tickets while explaining the reason behind the surge in pilgrim rush on Saturday.

It may be recalled that the TTD increased the offline Sarva Darshan tickets from 7,000 to 10,000 daily for 10 days from December 24 to January 3 for the pilgrims more so locals on the occasion of Vaikunta Ekadasi for darshan of Lord and also Vaikunta Dwara darshan.

The TTD in a path-breaking move resolved to keep open the Vaikunta Dwaram at the famed Sri Venkateswara temple for 10 days against two day earlier to facilitate large number of devotees to have the opportunity of Vaikunta Dwara Darshan also known as Uttara Dwara Darshan.

The daily quota of 20,000 special entry tickets released by TTD online on December 11 for advance booking for darshan from December 24 to January 3 during the holy Vaikunta Ekadasi fete were sold out within a day revealing the huge demand for darshan during the auspicious occasion.

Uncertainty continues on AP Junior Inter admissions

- The class work started on Nov 16, but the seat allotment list is yet to be released by the Board
- A case on the online admission process filed by some private managements is pending before High Court
- As per the original calendar, the academic year-end examinations are to be held in April
- With the delay in finalising the admissions, it may be difficult for the faculty to complete the syllabus, though it was reduced by 30 per cent
- Any change in academic calendar may impact other examinations like EAMCET and NEET

V PRADEEP KUMAR
TIRUPATI

UNCERTAINTY looms over junior Intermediate admissions in the State with the process yet to be completed. So much confusion and controversy in the online admission process introduced by the Board of Intermediate Education this year has led to the present state of ambiguity.

With the case filed by some private junior colleges pending before the High Court against the online admission system, the entire process has to be stalled.

The online admission process began on October 21 while the number of candidates looking for admission has gone up with the government's decision to pass all SSC candidates in view of the



Palamaner Junior College in Chittoor district (representational purpose)

Covid situation. Initially, there were fewer options for them to choose the right college on the Board's website.

Several reputed colleges were not included in the options list with which confusion prevailed among students and parents. However, officials maintained that they have included only those colleges which fulfilled all eligibility criteria. Subsequently, they started adding colleges one after another barring a few.

According to a government junior college faculty, except those located in shopping complexes and under RCC sheds, all other colleges were included. Moreover, the Board has put a ceiling on the number of students in each section at 40 beyond which the online system will not accept the request.

With all these, the private colleges want to stop the online process and bring back the old system. After the closing of the admission process, the Board has to release the seat allotment list to each and every college which was not done till now, citing the court

case, observed a Principal.

However, the Board asked the colleges to resume class work in both online and offline modes from November 16. Though many colleges are running classes like this, the students were in a state of uncertainty over their admission. Another government junior lecturer commented that, several private colleges took initiative by reaching out to the students and completed the admission process on their behalf.

As per the original calendar, the academic year end examinations are to be held in April. With the delay in finalising the admissions, it may be difficult for the faculty to complete the syllabus though 30 per cent of it was cut. Any delay in academic calendar will have an adverse impact on other examinations like EAMCET, NEET etc.,

In addition to this, the government is learnt to have asked the Principals to upload the information of those eligible for Amma Vodi scheme before December 15 even though the list of final seat allotment is yet to be released.

Massive rally for Amaravati as AP capital tomorrow

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

ON the occasion of completion of one year of agitation for the continuation of Amaravati as the capital city of the State, Amaravati Parirakshana Samiti is organising a massive rally on Tuesday (December 15) in the city and urged the people in general and members of all political parties except YSR Congress Party to make it a big success by take part in it.

The joint action committee of the Amaravati Parirakshana Samiti (APS) which met here on Sunday with its conveners A Siva Reddy and G Tirupati Rao in the chair, exhorted people to participate in large numbers in the Amaravati Parirakshana Padayatra in the city.

Several women's organisations of APS, people's associations, members of various political parties, Dalit and Bahujan organisations, workers, farmers and traders associations participated in the meeting at the APS state office here on Sunday.

Convenor of JAC Siva Reddy addressing the gathering said that the JAC has been with the farmers and farm workers who have been agitating for the last one year. He appealed to the people to participate in large numbers in the rally to do justice to the farmers who sacrificed their land for the sake of the capital city. He said that the people all over the State are demanding only Amaravati as the capital city. He made it clear that the agitation would not be stopped at any cost.

Kejriwal to fast for farmers' cause today

Continued from P1

Thousands of farmers from Haryana and Punjab have been protesting for the past three weeks in and around several borders of Delhi against the three farm laws.

Meanwhile, the farmers protesting against the agricultural laws had warned the government that they would hold a day's fast if their demands were not met by December 19.

Five killed as car collides with lorry in Hyderabad

Continued from P1

"We have also checked the tipper vehicle and have collected the blood samples of the lorry driver to see if there was any alcohol consumption," the Inspector said. However, the samples of the dead were not checked yet for alcohol consumption.

The driver of the tipper has been booked under Section 304(A) of IPC and is detained for further questioning, the Inspector added.

Agitation only way to get BCs rights protected: Union leader

HANS NEWS SERVICE
RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM

BC Welfare Association national president R Krishnaiah has said an intensive agitation is inevitable to get the rights of BCs, which were pending for many years.

Participating in BC Welfare Association meeting held at Uma Ramalingeswara Swamy Kalyana Mandapam here on Sunday, he said the political parties were treating BCs as their vote banks and after getting elected to power they were ignoring them. The people are vexed with the promises of ruling parties and agitation is the only way to achieve their rights. The BC population is above 60 per cent in the country and they were not getting proper treatment.

Krishnaiah demanded 50 per cent reservation for BCs in legislative bodies. He also demanded enactment of BC Atrocities Prevention Act, like SC /ST Atrocities Prevention Act.

He further said because of the association's efforts, as

Urges Centre to enact BC Atrocities Prevention Act on lines of SC, ST Atrocities Prevention Act



BC Welfare Association national president R Krishnaiah and other leaders at a meeting in Rajamahendravaram on Sunday

many as 2,000 GOs were issued across the country. As many as 30 lakh BC students were getting fee reimbursement and 12 lakh students free education.

Many States are not implementing the schemes for BC welfare in the country. All BCs should work together to fulfill

their demands, he added.

MP Margani Bharat Ram underlined the need for coordinated efforts by BCs to capture power in the country.

BC Welfare Association leaders L Mallesh, B Sitaratnam, Challa Appa Rao and others were present.

NATIONAL ANIMAL: SHOULD COW REPLACE TIGER?

Cow is a sacred animal for Hindus for ages. India's neighbour Nepal declared cow as a national animal. This has also led to an intense debate in the country on whether the Indian government should also follow suit. *The Hans India* spoke to a cross section of people on the issue. A majority backed making cow the national animal. They said whether it is a house-warming ceremony or initiating a new venture, ushering in a cow is considered a good omen and a sign of lucky charm. However, a few said what benefit does a common man derive by enacting a legislation making cow the national animal. They pointed out that as per the Constitution, all religions are equal in the nation.



As a Muslim educated person, I support Karnataka passing a law banning cow slaughtering. Prohibition of cow slaughtering is not just enough to obtain benefit to cow or the Hindu religion. I agree the cow is a holy animal for Hindus, which is being worshipping as a God all over the country. At the same time as our Constitution says respect all religions wit out any ill-feelings. It seems only politicians are interested to implement new religious policies, Acts & laws. But general public are not interested in such things.

Gaffoor Chandana,
advocate, Anantapur



I support cow slaughter ban legislation and is not averse to declaring cow as a national animal. I had been worshipping cow as a God since my childhood but more than cow slaughter ban it is the atrocities on women that should be totally prevented. There are issues more crucial than the cow in the country. Child marriages and sexual exploitation of girls and women are more serious issues that need our attention. Even today women are not treated on equal footing with men. I am a rural woman who grew with cows and knew the value of cow and its products but i had not seen law taking stern action against culprits who raped and killed women. So I feel not cow protection but women protection is the need of the hour.

A Shalini Dora,
Singanamala,
Anantapur



The division between Hindu and non-Hindu people is already visible in the country, due to the policies of the State and Central governments. The issue to coronate cow as the national animal in place of the Bengal tiger will differentiate the public for one more time. But what will be the difference in the life of a common man whether the national animal is the tiger or a cow or even a buffalo?

N Rajesh, private employee, Ongole



Cow is a spiritual animal and our epics also explain its importance. It is the time to protect cow, by giving national animal status and imposing a ban its killing. Even while performing the last rites of a person, cow will be donated to get moksha.

K Subba Rao, businessman,
Rajamahendravaram



Cow is a divine animal and part and parcel of Hindu dharma. Cow is worshipped by everybody during auspicious days and functions. Cow is having all Gods in her and deserves national animal status. But, the Central government should ban killing of cows after according national animal status. Till now the government neglected the protection of cow and it is the time to save it with national animal status.

Dr Gubbala Rambabu,
social activist, Rajamahendravaram



Cow is a sacred animal to the Hindus for several thousand years and it must be declared as our national animal. Worshipping cow is considered a sacred tradition and we should construct Gosalas for the protection of cows. Already the government has made several laws for the protection of cows. But, it should be implemented very strictly. The killers of cows must be punished so that the slaughter of cows can be stopped.

K Murthy, private employees,
Vijayawada



The significance of worshipping cow dates back to ancient days. From its milk to its excretion, everything has its own relevance. The sacred cows will be largely saved if they get the status of the national animal. If 'Gosala' is maintained in every temple, the importance of cows will only rise among devotees.

Athmakuri Ravi Kumar, Mukhya Archakulu,
Simhachalam Devasthanam, Visakhapatnam



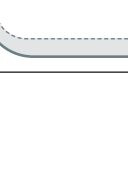
Prime Minister Narendra Modi should take immediate steps to protect cows and declare cow as a national animal. Cow milk and ghee is used for performing Abhishekams and yagnams. During housewarming ceremonies, we perform pujas to cows. The Uttar Pradesh government has taken steps to protect cows and set up Gosalas. The TTD had already set up Gosalas. The government should take steps to check slaughtering of cows.

H Rama Krishna, senior citizen, Guntur



Combined efforts are needed to declare cow as a national animal immediately. The government must ban slaughtering of cows and bring new Acts in this regard. Vedic pundits perform yagas and yagnas with cow ghee and as a result we get rains which are useful for agricultural cultivation. The Central and State governments should conduct campaign to create awareness among people to explain the significance of cow, cow dung, cow milk and ghee.

Vanama Sridevi, housewife, Guntur



I would like to describe the cow as a pious and sacred animal which is a gift give by God to mankind. Its milk, dung and urine are highly valuable and useful to human lives. Since ages, cow is being worshipped by Hindus. I sincerely urge the Central government to declare cow as a national animal. All Hindu organisations should support the move to declare cow as a national animal.

M Devarajulu Naidu,
RTC employee, S G Nagar, Chittoor



Legislation banning cow slaughter is a welcome move but in a secular country like India where multiple communities live together and when one man's food is another man's poison, laws should not be made favouring one single community. Constitution talks about equality of all religions. Our country is secular in character but some political parties are functioning and behaving in a way violating the basic tenets of the constitution. Moreover, Prime Minister Modi government has made laws hostile to minority communities and created road blocks for flow of foreign funds to support services to the poor and needy. We are not against ban on cow slaughter or declaring cow as a national animal. But a legislation on making cow as a national animal is of no use to the common man. Laws should trigger in social change not social unrest.

K Jabez David,
social worker, Anantapur



Mahatma Gandhi's Grama Swaraj is far more important than the anti-cow slaughter law. Let the government distribute cows to every household free of cost and promote cow milk, ghee and other products on a massive scale as the law is not of any use to the common man. The law does not help the poor in any way nor does the nation need such laws. This is purely a religious gimmick. Instead of bringing in such laws the government will do better by preventing the deaths of lakhs of cows for want of fodder.

S Jivaratnam, Malollapalli,
Narpala mandal, Anantapur



The Union government didn't make any proposal to make the national animal and I don't think it will take such a bold step. It is just the idea of a few people and we need not take it as a serious issue. But if the cow is really made the national animal, I feel that the voice of non-Hindus must be fading away.

Thota Naga Jyothi, private employee, Ongole



Cow is a multipurpose animal and also having importance medically. Its dung is used to kill bacteria, urine as medicine and its milk is a nutritious food. Without cow, no auspicious programme will be held and many feel that keeping a cow in their house, augurs well for them. It deserves national animal status.

K Venkat Reddy, hotel owner,
Rajamahendravaram



I support the idea of declaring cow as national animal of India. Our nation has long history of worshipping cow and crores of people do it with devotion. By declaring cow as national animal, the government and the people may take extra care for the protection of cows. Similarly, tigers should also be protected. The number of tigers in the country decreased in recent years and there is a need to maintain environmental balance. Importance should be given for protection of both cows and tigers. Animals are national property and the governments should take measures to protect them.

Nagineni Narayana Murthy,
student, Vijayawada



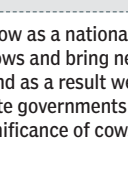
Whether it is a house-warming ceremony or initiating a new venture, ushering in a cow is considered a good omen and a sign of lucky charm. As per the Hindu tradition, all happy beginnings commence with performing a 'go-puja'. However, there is no protection for cows from getting slaughtered despite the significance they hold in the Hindu rituals. According national animal tag to the cow will help in safeguarding them and enhancing their importance further.

D Gopinath, Headmaster,
MPPS School, Narsipatnam, Visakhapatnam



The government should impose 2% tax on milk and take steps to protect cows and bulls. The government should set up Gosalas to feed old cows and bulls and prevent their slaughtering. If the farmers use cow dung as a fertiliser, the fertility of land will increase and cost of production will come down. The significance of cow is highlighted in Puranas. There is a need to protect various breeds of cows and bulls. Performing Yagas will help bring rains. However, to perform yagas and yagnas we need cow ghee. I demand that the Central government take steps to declare cow as a national animal.

Dasari Ram Mohan Rao, social activist, Guntur



I wonder why tiger was earlier declared as a national animal. I can firmly say that cow deserves to be recognised as a national animal. I understand that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is very much particular to introduce a Bill in Parliament for according national animal status to cow which will be highly appreciated. I strongly support the Prime Minister in the regard.

V Bhanu Priya, ward secretary, K R Palli, Chittoor



You don't need to be a genius or a visionary, or even a college graduate for that matter, to be successful. You just need framework and a dream
—Michael Dell



HANS INVEST

Stocks.MFs.Bonds.Commodities

THE HANS INDIA
DELHI MONDAY 14 DECEMBER 2020

Mkt course hinges on macro data

CHERUKURI KUTUMBA RAO

S spurred by the progress on vaccine front, indications of V-shaped recovery of economic activity on domestic front, record FII inflows and positive global cues; markets extended their winning streak for sixth consecutive week. Benchmark indices continued to hit fresh record highs in the week ended. On BSE, the Sensex crossed 46,000 for the first time, adding 1,019.46 points in the past week, while NSE Nifty gained 255.35 points to end at 13,513.90. In the month till now, FIIs purchased equities worth Rs 26,927.66 crore and DIIs sold equities worth Rs 18,625.86 crore.

Taking cue from frontline indices, the broader markets also performed impressively with Nifty Midcap and Smallcap indices gaining around 1 per cent and 2 per cent, respectively. It is pertinent to observe that over the past six weeks, the Midcap and Smallcap indices have seen swift upmove of more than 20 per cent. Ahead of the Q3 results season, possibility of temporary breather at higher levels can't be ruled out.

However, such a breather should be capitalised to accumulate quality stocks say market observers. Although the broader market's moves have been muted, there has been a big shift in the stocks and sectors that have outperformed lately. Investors have turned to groups that are expected to outperform as a vaccine is disseminated and the economy steadily recovers. Industry top guns suggest that post-Covid-19 new world order offers limitless opportunity for India, but for the country to be ready to participate in it, there is a need to establish



regulatory standards on data and taxation in general.

Over the weekend, the Reserve Bank of India clarified that borrowers, seeking resolution of their bad debt under the Covid-19 stress scheme as suggested by the KV Kamath Committee, need not submit a resolution plan that the lenders would evaluate, rather, they can simply request by December 31.

On the global front, all eyes are on prospective stimulus package in US and the Brexit imbroglio in Europe. The UK's current commercial and trading ties with the EU expire on Jan 1. If a deal can't be struck, both sides are preparing for significant border disruption affecting trade worth close to \$900 billion a year. In the week ahead apart from global cues, market will react to the macroeconomic data such as IIP and CPI inflation.

Quick restaurant chain Burger King is expected to have a strong debut on December 14 as shares are trading with a massive 75 per cent premium in the grey market on December 11. Old timers suggest positive yet cautious approach citing overbought conditions and suggest limiting leveraged positions. It's prudent to

stick with stock-specific trading approach and using dips to add quality stocks.

Heard on the street

As the rollout of vaccine begins, there may still be plenty of swings in stock prices to come. With millions getting injected, how will markets react to reports of sickness or deaths among those who have received the vaccine, even without a link to the shot? With unknowns like the length of the immunity from these vaccines, it's unclear if this will be a one-time job or a yearly jab - and therefore, if this is temporary boost to earnings or an ongoing benefit for the companies involved. The pandemic and containment measures had a more severe impact on the economies across the globe than previously anticipated. With markets at elevated levels, caution is the watch word for near term.

Futures & options/sector watch

Mirroring the sentiment in cash segment, derivative segment witnessed robust volumes interspersed with sharp stock specific movements. On option front,

maximum open interest in Puts is at 13,000 followed by 12,000 strike; while maximum open interest in Calls is at 13,000 followed by 13,500 strike. Call writing is seen at 13,700 then 13,800 strike while Put writing is seen at 13,200 then 13,500 strike. The Implied Volatility (IV) of calls closed at 15.68 per cent while that for put options closed at 16.07. The Nifty VIX for the week closed at 18.71 per cent. PCR OI for the week closed at 1.84.

Punters predict the bias to remain in favor of bulls as far the Nifty is holding above 13,300 mark. For Bank Nifty 30,000 mark would be key psychological support. Failure to sustain above 13,600 would lead to consolidation in the 13,600-13,200 range amid stock specific action. Adding to the existing Nifty and Bank Nifty, NSE is introducing another index derivative-Nifty Financial Services Index from January 11, 2021.

The Nifty Financial Services Index comprises of 20 stocks and is designed to reflect the behaviour and performance of the Indian financial services market which includes banks, financial institutions, housing finance, insurance companies and other financial services companies. Hectic activity was seen in FMCG and PSU Bank sectors during the week ended. With visible V-shaped recovery of economic activity in October and both factory output and core sector growth inching up to the pre-Covid level; FMCG, Capital Goods and Infrastructure sectors are attracting renewed attention. Buy on declines HUL, ITC and Marico. Use dips to accumulate Cummins India, Siemens and L&T.

Expected hike in GOI spending in the last quarter of FY20-21 has

pulled infrastructure stocks in focus. On the back of reports that CCI is investigating cartelisation allegations on cement companies; sharp selling was seen in cement stocks. Industry sources refute the reports and indicate that revival in demand has triggered the price hikes and not cartelisation. Use the correction to buy ACC, Ambuja Cements, Ultratech and Ramco Cements.

Stock futures looking good for buying are Bharat Forge, Hindustan Zinc, Glenmark Pharma, GMR Infra, HDFC, Kotak Bank, Maruti and Sun TV. Sell on rallies: ACC, BEL, Escorts, Hindalco and Wipro.

Stock picks

Olectra Greentech Limited, formerly Goldstone Infratech Limited, is engaged in manufacturing polymer insulators and is pioneer in electric bus manufacturing in India. It is a part of the MEIL Group. Olectra has major interests in composite insulators, amorphous core-distribution transformers, data analysis, IT consulting and electric buses. Buy for surprising target price of Rs250 in medium term.

Elgi Equipments Limited is a global air compressor manufacturer with a broad line of innovative and technologically superior compressed air systems. The company offers a complete range of compressed air solutions from oil lubricated and oil free rotary screw compressors, oil lubricated and oil free reciprocating compressors. Buy on declines for target price of Rs275 in medium term.

(The author is a stock market expert. He is former vice chairman of AP Planning Board)

IN SHORT

Srinivas Maddineni banned from mkts

SEBI imposed a one-year ban from the securities market and a fine of Rs 11 lakh on an individual for insider trading activities in the shares of Divi's Laboratories in 2017. Besides, the individual, Srinivas Maddineni, has been directed not to deal in the shares of the company for two years. Also, he has been asked to disgorge wrongful gains of Rs 1.83 lakh along with 12 per cent annual interest. The interest would be applicable from July 10, 2017, till the date of actual payment of the disgorgement amount. The watchdog had conducted an investigation into suspected insider trading activities of certain entities in the shares of Divi's Laboratories during the July 7-10, 2017 period. The individual had bought 4,000 shares of Divi's July 10, 2017 and around two-and-a-half hours later, a disclosure regarding the USFDA removing the import alert was made by the company, as per the order. He was an Assistant General Manager in the environment, health and safety department and a designated person at the company during the UPSI period.

Forex reserves surge to \$579.3 bn

AFTER declining in the last week, the country's foreign exchange reserves surged by \$ 4.525 billion to touch a record high of \$ 579.346 billion in the week ended December 4, the RBI data showed. In the previous week ended November 27, the reserves had declined by \$ 469 million to \$ 574.821 billion. In the reporting week, the increase in reserves was on account of a rise in foreign currency assets (FCA), a major component of the overall reserves. FCA rose by \$ 3.932 billion to \$ 537.386 billion, the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) weekly data showed. Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves. Gold reserves increased by \$ 535 million in the reporting week to \$ 35.728 billion in the week ended December 4, the data showed. The special drawing rights (SDRs) with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) rose by \$ 12 million to \$ 1.506 billion. The country's reserve position with the IMF increased by \$46 million to \$ 4.725 billion.

New norms floated for index providers

MARKETS regulator Sebi said it has come out with a consultation paper on compliance standards for index providers to ensure quality and integrity of the indices. Based on IOSCO (International Organization of Securities Commissions) (IOSCO) principles, practices observed internationally and suitability for domestic markets, the paper has provided a suggestive framework for index providers in India under three heads, Sebi said in a statement. The framework has been suggested in respect of indices based on which any product, including derivatives, exchange-traded funds and market-linked debentures are traded on the bourses. Also, the guideline has been proposed in case of indices constructed based on data provided by exchanges as well as in respect of indices provided by the index providers that are used by mutual funds for benchmarking of fund performances or issuance of index funds.

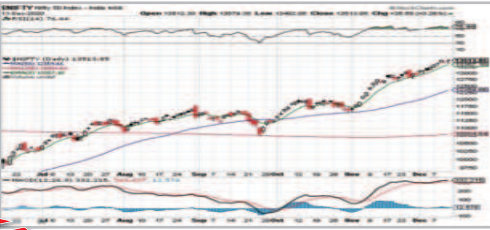
Uptrend likely to continue in mkts

FMCG, energy sector show improvement

THOVITI BRAHMACHARY

Equity market's buoyancy continued for the sixth consecutive week. During the last week, the benchmark index, Nifty, gained by 255.3 points or 1.9 per cent. It scaled to a fresh all-time high of 13,579 last week. The broader markets performed in tandem with the benchmark as Nifty Midcap-100 and Smallcap-100 gained one per cent and two per cent respectively. Financial and consumption sector outperformed while auto and metal sector took a breather. FIIs continues to buy the equities.

Nifty formed a long-legged doji with the last selling pressure. Out of trading sessions, it formed three doji candles, which indicates the indecisive behaviour is increasing. It traded in a narrower range during the week with increased volatility. Like in the recent past, several indecisive, bearish patterns failed to get the confirmation. Even many indicators overstretched and the negative divergences presence did not show any impact on the ongoing uptrend. The 127.6 per cent re-accumulation level of prior fall placed at 13,788, which 275 points away from now. We cannot forecast more than this level at a current juncture, as the benchmark index is looking for a much extended



rally and is in an extreme overbought condition.

Nifty continuously closed above the upper Bollinger band on the weekly chart for the fifth consecutive week. It may lead to a brief consolidation before continuing the current trend. The support placed at 13,400 for next week. As Nifty is failing to close below the prior bar low for a bearish implication, it is better to be in the trend with strict stop loss and risk management.

On the indicator front, RSI (76.46) currently in an extreme overbought condition and has a hidden divergence. It made parallel high at 78.9, but the price is making higher highs.

Even on the weekly chart, RSI is at 73.91 and in an overbought condition. Interestingly, the MACD histogram is not rising and showing a severe negative divergence. MACD line also formed parallel highs. It is at a historically high level. In these conditions, the probability of consolidating between 13,600-13,350 is higher. The 8 EMA is acting as key support for the index since

November lows. Only below this level, Nifty may enter into counter-trend consolidation.

On a 75-minute chart, Nifty is taking support at 20DMA several times. On this lower timeframe, the 13,380-350 is a support zone. As Nifty formed long-legged doji, a negative close on Monday will be the first sign of weakness.

We need to watch the Dollar index, as it is in an oversold condition. Any bounce will pause the FII flows into the domestic market. Currently, Nifty is trading at 37.16 Price-Earning ratio, which is never seen before. Even on the future earnings (FY22), the PE is in an extremely overvaluation zone of 27. In this scenario, either the price (index) should come down, or the earning should go up.

FMCG and energy sectors are showing an improvement, and many of the leading stocks in this are in good technical structure. The sector rotation and the funds' flow will be crucial drivers for the next week, as there are no negative triggers at present.

(The author is a financial journalist and technical analyst. He can be reached at tbchary@gmail.com)

Three ways of mitigating investment risks



K Naresh Kumar

When we make any investment decision, there always will be a risk against which we make return. Mark Zuckerberg famously quoted about risk as 'the biggest risk in life is not taking any risk'. And that risk is a probabilistic event and mostly not certain. If it's certain then the potential returns from such an investment comes down as the risks would easily be discounted for. That's the logic behind the perception that higher risks could derive higher returns from an investment. Also, certain times, the risk can't be assessed i.e., one can't expect the source or the possibility of the type of event.

Howard Marks has brilliantly described risk with this story: "I tell my father's story of the gambler who lost regularly. One day he hears about a race with only one horse in it, so he bet the rent money. Halfway around the track, the horse jumped over the fence and ran away." Now how would anyone imagine such an outcome and that unimaginable

is what risk looks like. So, one can't plan for all risks or no model in the world can avoid risk but could mitigate to an extent, only. Carl Richard says it best, "risk is what's left over when you think you've thought of everything else".

So, most of the grave risk originates from that is unknown or unthought of as if no one has thought about it, then none is prepared to handle it. History is littered with such examples both in finance and otherwise. Though, risk could be quantified and assessed in an investment or a portfolio, psychological effect on us is deeply varied. If we were to define a risk through a percentage of possible loss to the investment, then the emotion attached or experienced due to such a loss is not equal to that of the emotion

Loss aversion, pioneered by Daniel Kahneman, suggests that when choosing among alternatives, people avoid losses and optimise for sure wins because the pain of losing is greater than the satisfaction of an equivalent Gain



generated to the same quantum or percentage of gain experienced or achieved.

Loss aversion, pioneered by Daniel Kahneman suggests that when choosing among alternatives, people avoid losses and optimize for sure wins because the pain of losing is greater than the satisfaction of an equivalent gain. Innumerable studies have shown that the desire to avoid losses is wired more strongly into our brains than the desire to achieve gains as future outcomes are mostly uncertain. Quoting Marks again, 'there's a big difference between probability and outcome. Probable things fail to happen - and improbable things happen - all the time.'

So, where does luck come into the picture? Does luck play any part? How many of us would like to be associated with 'dumb' luck? One doesn't need to be smart to be lucky, so we add up various variables that would eventually lead us to gain some clarity on risk.

Luck and risk are two sides of the same coin, but we treat them differently. This is because we tend to appropriate reasons

of our conviction or actions for some random event that helped us to make the rewards but any loss due to risk is associated with that event.

In other words, returns are always adjusted for risk but never for luck. Does this mean that all hard work is lost? Nope! The biggest risk mitigation is about how one behaves towards the market reactions than how markets respond to the news. What has trumped investing is consistency, persistency and diligence. The consistently in behaviour during various cycles of markets (systematic investment), the persistence in sticking to the plan (asset diversification), and the diligence to stay invested through the cycles to gain of the investment (compounding).

These three principles could help mitigate the risk effectively for an individual. Arriving at a plan in tandem with the risk appetite and timelines. Contributing to the plan over the period of the desired period with possible alteration to the allocations when desired allowing the investments do their bit. Would like to end with a quote from one of the greatest value investors of all time, Charlie Munger, 'it's not supposed to be easy. Anyone who finds it easy is stupid.' The efforts are needed but at right places.

(The author is a co-founder of "Wealocity", a wealth management firm and could be reached at knk@wealocity.com)

DERIVATIVES OUTLOOK

DASARI SREENIVASA RAO

As per the futures and options (F&O) data on NSE, the higher build-up of Put Open Interest (OI) is pointing towards support levels moving up. The support level has gone up by 500 points when compared with the previous week. The 14,000 strike has highest Call OI of 31.06 lakh contracts followed by 13,500 strike with 24.31 lakh contracts, 13,600 strike, which recorded maximum Call OI of 13.35 lakh contracts, with 24.19 lakh contracts and 13,800 strike with 20.95 lakh contracts. The 14,000 strike also recorded significant Call OI build-up of 13.29 lakh contracts. Further, 13,500/13,550/13,700 strikes witnessed reasonable addition of Call OI.

Dhirender Singh Bisht, senior research analyst (derivatives) at

Put OI addition indicating support levels moving up

SMC Global Securities Ltd, said: "The wild swings were witnessed last week in Nifty as from derivatives front, Call writers at 13,600 strike tried to cap any sharp gains in Nifty, but bulls somehow manage to keep index well above 13,500 mark," remarked Bisht.

Coming to Put side, highest Put OI concentration of 23.77 lakh contracts was at 12,500 strike followed by 13,000 strike with 22.29 lakh contracts, 13,500 strike, which recorded highest Put OI addition of 12.19 lakh contracts, with 20.61 lakh contracts and 13,300 strike with 17.76 lakh contracts. Other strikes 12,500/13,000/13,200 witnessed significant Put OI build up.

The continued writing among Put strikes has pushed the Put-Call Ratio (PCR) levels high and it has increased the probability of some intermediate profit booking in the market. On the higher side,

the highest Call base for the week is placed at 13,600 strike followed by 14,000 strike. Hence further up move should be expected if Nifty remains above 13,500 levels.

"Indian markets continued their winning streak for the sixth consecutive week, boosted by banking and FMCG space along with a strong rally in mid-caps. Nifty indices surpassed above 13,500 mark, while Bank Nifty also managed to close above 30,500 mark," remarked Bisht.

For the week ended December 11, 2020, BSE Sensex closed at 46,099.01 points, a net gain of

1,019.46 points or 2.26 per cent, as against 45,079.55 points. Similarly, NSE Nifty too moved up by 255.3 points or 1.92 per cent and closed at 13,513.85 points from 13,258.55 points.

Bisht forecasts that "from technical front, secondary oscillators suggest that volatility is likely to grip markets in the coming week as well.

However, we expect the bias should remain in favor of bulls as Nifty is holding above 13,300 mark. On the higher side, a decisive move above the 13,600 mark would add



F&O TRADING			
Product	Contracts	Turnover (Rs/cr)	Premium (Rs/cr)
Index Futures	3,87,123	33,420.48	--
Stock Futures	7,81,640	61,755.58	--
Index Options	1,83,63,946	15,93,602.99	10,106.56
Stock Options	13,78,252	1,13,148.47	2,882.41
F&O Total	2,09,10,961	18,01,927.52	12,988.97

Source: NSE As on Dec 04, 2020

further upside momentum into the index which could take it towards 13,750 level as well."

The volatility index, India VIX, moved up marginally due to some profit taking seen on Friday. However, the VIX remained below 20 level. Analysts don't see any major uptick in volatility index, the current positive bias should continue.

"The Implied Volatility of Calls closed at 15.68 per cent, while that for Put options closed at 16.07. The Nifty VIX for the week closed at

18.71 per cent. PCR of OI for the week closed at 1.84," further added Bisht.

Bank Nifty

The NSE's banking index Bank Nifty closed at 30,604.85 points, a net rise of 552.45 points or 1.83 per cent from 30,052.40 points. "For Bank Nifty, the 30,000 mark would be key psychological support," says Bisht.

Last week, Bank Nifty consolidated above 30,500 level. Among the private banks, HDFC Bank

witnessed profit booking whereas supportive action was seen from other private banks and PSU leader SBI. Most of the private banks witnessed support from its sizable Put base and reverted higher due to which the Call writers moved to far OTM strike which is the positive sign.

According to ICICI Direct.com, Bank Nifty futures premium remained near 50 points, whereas the OI continued to decline. As the index sustained above 30,500 levels, fresh OI addition was seen in 31,000 strike, however, more upsides could be seen above this levels. Major Put OI writing activity is seen in 30,000 strike Put followed by 29,500 which remains the strong support zone.

The price ratio of Bank Nifty-Nifty remained flat last week as no major out-performance was seen in any of the index. However, we continue to feel that more upsides are left in banking stocks and going ahead, might see Bank Nifty heading towards 32,000 levels.

KCR-Modi meet: State BJP rules out any impact on party’s stand

Saffron party leaders say their only mission is to unseat the TRS in 2023 Assembly elections and bring BJP to power in Telangana

VRC PHANIHARAN
HYDERABAD

TELANGANA State BJP leadership felt that Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao's meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi would not favour the TRS in any manner as meeting was purely to discuss State's issues. According to party sources, certain quarters in the pink party are spreading that the 30-minute meeting between the two leaders has brought peace between the

two political parties who have fought bitterly in the Dubbaka bypoll and GHMC elections. Speaking to The Hans India, the State core committee member of the BJP said the meeting would have no bearing on the political stand of the party and the meet-



ing of KCR should be seen like any other State CM meeting the PM in his official capacity. Earlier too, BJP National OBC Morcha president Dr K Laxman stated that the saffron party leadership was serious about fighting upfront in the political arena with the TRS and the BJP was

working towards ending the corruption and dynastic rule run by the TRS government in Telangana and to bring the saffron party to power in 2023. "Mission-2023 is our agenda," he said, adding that the party was gearing up for contesting Nagarjunasagar bypoll. "The party will decide who will be its candidate. We are not looking for any alliance and only working to prove that the BJP is the only potential alternative to the pink brigade in the State," Laxman added.

LAWCET/PGLCET counselling from today

Candidates have to upload the scanned copies of original certificates for preliminary certificate verification

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE first phase of TS LAW CET and PGL CET 2020 counselling for admission into the 3 and 5-years LLB course and 2-years LLM course will start from Monday. TS LAW CET/PGL CET-2020 convener Prof P Ramesh Babu in a statement on Sunday said that the notification has been issued on December 11 for the first phase of counselling to



take admission into the above courses for the academic year 2020-21. He said that the candidates have to upload the scanned copies of original cer-

tificates for preliminary certificate verification. A total number of candidates qualified in TS LAW CET/PGL CET -2020 is 21,559. All the candidates have to be ready with the original certificates at the time of attending the counselling process. For further details, the candidates can visit the TSLAWCET/PGLCET-2020 website.

Agri laws will help corporates tighten grip on farm sector: Chada

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KODAD (SURYAPET)

CPI State secretary Chada Venkat Reddy stated that Central government's three farm laws would help corporates tighten their grip on farming sector. Addressing the media persons in Kodad on Sunday, he said farmers have been agitating for their rights for first time in the history of the country and added that new farm laws would push

Expresses pleasure over Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao supporting Bharat Bandh

the farmers into deep troubles. He informed that party would protest against the new farm laws in all district headquarters on Monday and added that they would stage protest phase wise till the farm laws are repealed by the BJP government. He expressed his pleasure over Chief

Minister K Chandrashekar Rao supporting the Bharat Bandh and opined that KCR should submit a memorandum to PM Modi during his visit to Delhi. Party leaders Palla Venkat Reddy, Dodda Narayana Rao, Bejawada Venkateshwarlu and others attended the press meet.

Edn Minister inaugurates Medvik Hospital

HANS NEWS SERVICE
CHEVELLA

EDUCATION Minister Sabita Indra Reddy inaugurated Medvik Hospital at Azeeznagar junction near Moinabad on Sunday. Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that the private hospitals have to provide better medical facilities to people in rural ar-

reas, and the State government was also working towards enhancing facilities at the existing government hospitals. Chevella MLA Kale Yadaiah, Moinabad MPP N Jevanth, State Sarpanches Association vice-president Manjula Ravi, former ZPTC Chandra Lingam Goud, Vikram Goud and other local leaders participated in the programme.



Kasturba student selected for State-level dance competition

HANS NEWS SERVICE
SHADNAGAR

A student of Kasturba Gandhi School, S Nandini, has been selected for the State-level dance competition as part of Kala Utsav to be held in Hyderabad on December 15. Kasturba Gandhi School SO Shakeena and Kala Utsav in-charge Chandrashekar informed about the selection of the student for competitions.



S.Nandini

TRS, Congress misleading farmers on agri laws: BJP

HANS NEWS SERVICE
SHADNAGAR

BJP Rangareddy district president Bokka Narasimha Reddy has criticised the TRS and the Congress parties for misleading the farmers on Centre's farm laws at a press meet held in Shadnagar on Sunday. "The farm laws are set to transform the lives of farmers and it is unfortunate that TRS and Congress misleading the farmers for their political gains," he said. The Centre, as part of the Atma Nirbhar Bharat stimulus, has lifted all restrictions over agri-product transportation to empower farmers to sell their products at their price and choice of location, he added. Stating that Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao had cheated

farmers of the State by promising to buy all their crops during the last season, the BJP leader said in a majority of the IKP centres in the State, a lot of farm produce, especially paddy, got damaged due to hailstorm. However, the CM did not bother to rescue the farmers. Due to lockdown, vegetable and fruit farmers incurred heavy losses and the State government has failed to help them. Shadnagar BJP in-charge Nelli Srivardhan Reddy, party Rangareddy district vice-president Bhupala Chary, general secretary Depally Ashok Goud, official spokesperson K Venkatesh Gupta, leaders Chendi Mahender Reddy, Matam Rushikesh, Murali, Venkatesh and other leaders attended the press meet.



SRINIVAS GUDUPALLI
MAHESHWARAM

THE encroachment of lands near lakes and streams is going unabated in the district. The land sharks are illegally setting up layouts in these areas and minting crores of rupees by selling them. According to sources, the land grabbers have encroached upon the premises of Suroni lake, spread in 55.05 acres in Tukkuguda Municipality lim-

- The value per acre at Suroni lake, spread in 55.05 acres in Tukkuguda Municipality limits, is more than Rs 5 crore
- With out obtaining NOC, the land grabbers are taking up illegal construction defying the rules set in the Walta Act

its, and established the layouts and further started construction in the layouts without obtaining the No Objection Certificate from the government. Due to the negligence of officials, the land sharks are able to encroach upon the lands near the lake where the value

of land per acre is more than Rs 5 crore. According to Water, Land and Trees (WALTA) Act, 30 meters area around the lake should be termed as the buffer zone and no construction should be allowed there. However, defying the Act many land grabbers have occupied the

lake space and setting up illegal layouts. On July 13, the Irrigation department officials have submitted a report regarding the encroachment of the Suroni lake and streams. But the officials have kept mum with no action initiated against the land grabbers. Meanwhile, people have alleged that many officials are hand in glove with the land grabbers and taking no action against them for encroaching the lands.

Three face mask fraudsters arrested

Manufacturers using fraudulent trademark of Ramraj Cotton to sell the product land in prison

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

THREE people who manufactured and sold face masks fraudulently using the trademark of Ramraj Cotton, a garment manufacturer headquartered at Tirupur, Tamil Nadu, have been arrested by the

Vijayawada I Town PS police. A complaint was filed by Ramraj Cotton with the DGP and Commissioner of Police. An enquiry was ordered and a separate team from Vijayawada I Town PS carried out the investigations. Gopipal Purohit - owner of Ronisa Impex, Vijay Singh - owner of National Lock House and Suresh Kumar Jain - owner of Sree Navaji Pratap Chandiji Fancy Store, all situated on Pulipativari Street, were arrested. Thousands of face masks were also recovered. Officials of Ramaraj Cotton Company requested the general public to buy their products from their authorised dealers and outlets only.



TRS will keep all its promises made during GHMC polls: Sabitha

The Education Minister takes part in a meeting organised by the party activists

HANS NEWS SERVICE
RK PURAM

EDUCATION Minister Sabitha Indra Reddy stated that all the promises made by the ruling Telangana Rashtra Samithi during the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation elections

would be fulfilled. Speaking at a meeting organised by the TRS activists in RK Puram on Sunday, she said TRS has been striving for the betterment of people, and would always keep development as their sole agenda. "TRS will make sure that it reaches the expectation of people who trusted and voted the pink party for the second time in the corporation elections," the Minister added.

Member of Legislative Council Dayanand, Maheshwaram constituency TRS party secretary Balkishan, RK Puram division TRS party president Aravind, Agriculture Market Committee Chairman Rama Narsimha Goud, former MPP Krishna Reddy, TRS leaders Bandi Meena, Patel Sunitha Reddy, Chandraiah, Jayender and other leaders also participated in the programme.

The cumulative Covid-19 positives now climbed to 8.75 lakh, recoveries to 8,63,508 and deaths 7,057, according to the latest bulletin. After 1.08 crore sample tests, at the rate of 2.02 lakh per million population, the overall infection positivity rate fell to 8 per cent. In 24 hours ending 9 am on Sunday, Chittoor district reported 104, Guntur 69, West Godavari 66 and Krishna 59 fresh Covid-19 cases.

Pilgrim rush swells at Tirumala

HANS NEWS SERVICE
TIRUPATI

AS many as 38,516 pilgrims had darshan of Lord Venkateswara at Tirumala temple on Saturday. The steady decline of corona cases nationwide coupled with the consecutive holidays due to Second Saturday and Sunday attracted more number of pilgrims to Tirumala.

The TTD on its part substantially increased the number of pilgrims being allowed for darshan by resuming many of the Arjitha (paid) Sevas with devotees' participation through virtual platforms. On Saturday, the number of pilgrims who had tansured their heads has increased to 14623, the highest so far while the cash offering in the Hundi was Rs 2.22 crore, according to a temple official. First the TTD resumed Kalyantotsavam with devotees' virtual participation and later Sahasra Deepalankara Seva, Arjitha Brahmotsavam and Unjal Seva providing darshan facility to the ticketholders who can avail the facility within three months after the booking of the tickets, following more and more relaxations announced by the Centre in the Covid norms. Darshan which was resumed at Tirumala temple on June 12 this year after the relaxation of Covid restrictions allowing 6,000 pilgrims daily (Rs 300 special entry online tickets and offline Sarva Darshan tickets 3,000 each) but was gradually increased by



TTD to cope with the heavy demand from devotees for darshan. Now 20,000 special entry tickets and 7,000 offline Sarva Darshan tickets are now being issued daily while a daily quota of 500 tickets each of Arjitha Brahmotsavam, Unjal Seva and SD Seva tickets also issued online in advance for the devotees for darshan increasing the total number of pilgrims allowed daily for darshan. A TTD official said the Arjitha Seva ticket holders including Kalyantotsavam, SD Seva, Brahmotsavam and Unjal seva preferring to visit Tirumala for darshan during holidays taking advantage of the 90 days time allowed by the TTD for darshan after the advance booking of the seva tickets while explaining the reason behind the surge in pilgrim rush on Saturday. It may be recalled that the TTD in-

creased the offline Sarva Darshan tickets from 7,000 to 10,000 daily for 10 days from December 24 to January 3 for the pilgrims more so locals on the occasion of Vaikunta Ekadasi for darshan of Lord and also Vaikunta Dwara darshan. The TTD in a path-breaking move resolved to keep open the Vaikunta Dwaram at the famed Sri Venkateswara temple for 10 days against two day earlier to facilitate large number of devotees to have the opportunity of Vaikunta Dwara Darshan also known as Uttara Dwara Darshan. The daily quota of 20,000 special entry tickets released by TTD online on December 11 for advance booking for darshan from December 24 to January 3 during the holy Vaikunta Ekadasi fete were sold out within a day revealing the huge demand for darshan during the auspicious occasion.

506 new cases in AP

AMARAVATI

ACTIVE coronavirus cases fell below the 5,000 mark to 4,966 in Andhra Pradesh on Sunday even as the State added 506 fresh positives, 613 recoveries and five deaths to its tally.

India yet to crack opening mystery

SYDNEY

WITH Cheteshwar Pujara (No.3), captain Virat Kohli (No. 4) and Ajinkya Rahane (No. 5) being automatic choices, India's batting line-up had two big questions ahead of the first Test against Australia at the Adelaide Oval -- who will face the new ball with Mayank Agarwal, and who will man the No. 6 slot.

The latter of those two questions have been answered with Hanuma Vihari making himself almost a certainty for the slot with a century in the day-night warm-up tie against Australia A. In the process, he also ended speculation that India could play two wicketkeepers, Rishabh Pant and Wriddhiman Saha, in the lower middle-order.

Vihari exuded confidence after scoring an unbeaten 104 off 194 deliveries on Saturday, the second day of the three-day warm-up tie under lights against Australia A.

"2018 was my second international tour. It was a challenge for me back then although I contributed a little I thought. Now, I feel I am very well-equipped with my game-plan as well. So I am looking forward to the series," Vihari said on Sunday after

Vihari cements No. 6, while Pujara (No.3), captain Kohli (No. 4) and Rahane (No. 5)

the match ended in a draw.

Pant impressed with a 73-ball century in the game, sharing an unbeaten 147-run partnership with Vihari, and could take the wicketkeeper's role ahead of Saha, who made a couple of ducks and a half-century in the two warm-up games. Although Saha remains India's best wicketkeeper, Pant's batting skills and his experience of scoring a Test hundred in Australia may give him the No. 7 position in the line-up, assuming India go in with four specialist bowlers.

Vihari said about who among the two will be picked but noted the benefits of a "healthy competition" within the team for positions.

"Healthy competition is always good for the team and I feel for every spot we have good competition. It is up to the team management to decide who gets picked. I feel both of them are looking in good form, it is a tough call, it is a good headache but it

is up to team management," Vihari said.

However, questions remain on who will partner Mayank Agarwal at the top. Agarwal did well as an opener during India's previous tour of Australia, scoring two half-centuries in both Tests he played and averaged 65. Since that Australia series, Agarwal has played with Rohit Sharma and Prithvi Shaw at the top of the batting order. In the warm-up match against Australia A, the 29-year-old right hander made a patient 61 in the second innings.

Rohit had done well as opener last year with phenomenal scores against South Africa at home but missed the two Tests in New Zealand early this year due to injury, leaving the slot open for Prithvi Shaw. Shaw went on to make just one fifty in four innings during the tour while failing to go past 20 in the other three.

Shaw has also failed to rack up big scores in the two warm-ups, his best being a 29-ball 40 in the first innings of the second warm-up. The 21-year-old right-handed batsman, who

scored a century on Test debut in 2018 but has played only four Tests, is also coming off a poor run in the second half of Indian Premier League.

KL Rahul, who was the vice-captain in the limited overs leg of the Australia tour, scored 76 in the second ODI and a 51 in the first T20I.

In the rest of the white ball matches, Rahul scored 12, 5, 30 and 0. He opened the innings on in the T20I series with Agarwal and Shikhar Dhawan being chosen at the top of the order for the ODIs. Despite the middling returns, Rahul's extraordinary season in the IPL, in which he was the top runscore, could make him favourite to open with Agarwal as the other option if Shaw is out of form.

Shubman Gill also has an outside chance but the right-hander succeeded in the second warm-up, the day-night fixture, as a No. 3 batsman, scoring 43 and 65. In the first warm-up, where he played as opener with the red ball, he got a duck and a 29. (IANS)

BRIEF SCORES

**India 194 and 386/4 declared, Australia A 108 and 307/4 (Jack Wildermuth 111*, Ben McDermott 107*; Mohammed Shami 2/58)
Result: Draw**

India dominates the second three-day warm-up game against Australia A which ended in a draw at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Sunday



NorthEast maintain unbeaten run

BAMBOLIM (GOA)



NORTHEAST United managed to grab only a point but extended their unbeaten run in the 2020/21 Indian Super League (ISL) as they played a 0-0 draw with Chennaiyin FC at Tilak

Maidan Stadium on Sunday.

With 10 points alongside ATK Mohun Bagan, NorthEast are placed second in the ISL table while Chennaiyin FC have now failed to pick up a win in their last four matches.

They made three changes to the side as Idrissa Sylla started upfront ahead of Kwesi Appiah. Meanwhile, Chennaiyin made two changes to their line-up with Anirudh Thapa among the substitutes. The first-half was a goal-less affair. Chennaiyin shaded possession but both sides lacked the cutting edge in the final third. NorthEast keeper Gurmeet Singh was called into action early on as Chennaiyin created a chance as early as the first minute.

NEUFC's Khassa Camara in action during the match against Chennaiyin FC at the Tilak Maidan Stadium in Vasco on Sunday



Match Results

NorthEast United FC tie with Chennaiyin FC 0-0

Bengaluru FC beat Kerala Blasters FC 4-2

Today's Fixture

Mumbai City FC vs Jamshedpur FC at GMC Stadium Bambolim 7.30pm

set-piece. Luis Machado whipped a teasing cross into the box from a corner for Dylan Fox, who only managed to fire his effort over the crossbar.

Both teams began the second half with intent. The Highlanders created a clear-cut chance in the 55th minute only to be denied by Chennaiyin keeper Vishal Kaith. VP Suhair received the ball on the left flank and fired a cross into the box for Sylla, whose powerful shot was tipped over the crossbar.

Chhangte had another opportunity to score the opener before the hour mark. After receiving the ball on the rebound after a save from Gurmeet, the winger placed his effort over the bar from close range. (IANS)

'Azam being ruled out of NZ T20Is major setback for us'

QUEENSTOWN

BABAR Azam being ruled out for Pakistan's upcoming T20I series against New Zealand is a "major setback" for the visitors, according to bowling coach Waqar Younis. Pakistan captain Azam suffered a fracture on his right thumb during a throw-down session on Sunday.

"There is no doubt that Babar is one of the best players in the world now in any format. So it is a major setback for us. Other teams are scared of him," Waqar said in a media interaction with Pakistani journalists.

"It is unfortunate that it (injury) happened at the wrong time, just at the stroke of the series starting."

Waqar, however, said that it is also an opportunity for other players to stand up and fill the gap left by Azam.

Azam suffered the injury during a throw-down session, following which he was taken to a local hospital where X-rays confirmed the fracture, stated Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) in a media release.

As such, he will be unable to attend nets for, at least, 12 days, meaning he will not be available for the December 18, 20 and 22 T20Is to be played in Auckland, Hamilton and Napier, respectively. During this period, the doctors will continue to monitor Azam's injury before confirming his participation in the first Test, which starts at Bay Oval, Mount Maunganui, on December 26. (IANS)

ICC announces rescheduled qualification pathway for 2022 U-19 WC

DUBAI

THE International Cricket Council (ICC) on Sunday announced the rescheduled qualification pathway to the U-19 World Cup 2022, where 33 teams will compete for five World Cup spots. Qualification for the 2022 edition of the tournament was earlier delayed by a year due to Covid-19 pandemic.

The 14th edition of the event, which takes place in the West Indies in early 2022, will involve Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, England, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, South Africa, Sri Lanka, West Indies and Zimbabwe by virtue of their top 11 finish in the 2020 edition.

The remaining five spots will be determined by regional qualification. The 33 spots will be decided by seven regional events starting in June 2021. Due to the depth in strength in the Africa and Asia regions, a two-division qualification pathway will take place.

Teams from the other three regions, Americas, EAP and Europe, will have a one division qualifying process, with the winner of each regional Qualifier claiming one of the five places for the 2022 event.

The road to the West Indies will begin in Tanzania with the Africa Division 2 in June 2021. The hosts, Botswana, Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda and Sierra Leone will be fighting for two spots to join Namibia, Nigeria and Uganda in the Africa Qualifier in September 2021. The qualifier will be hosted by Nigeria who competed in their first

ever ICC event at the U19 World Cup earlier this year. The top team from the September event will secure their spot in the West Indies.

The Asia region, which also has two divisions, will see two qualifiers from Bhutan, Hong Kong, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore and Thailand in Division 2 join Malaysia, Nepal and UAE nine in the Asia Qualifier to be hosted in the United Arab Emirates with the top team qualifying for the West Indies. The top team from the remaining qualifiers East-Asia Pacific, Europe and Americas will make up the World Cup line-up.

In Europe, Scotland will host the Qualifier from July 30 to August 5 and will compete alongside Denmark, Guernsey, Ireland, Jersey and the Netherlands for the World Cup spot. The USA will host the Americas Qualifier and will be joined by Argentina, Bermuda and Canada between August 18 and 25, 2021.

Finally, the EAP qualifier which consists of Indonesia, PNG, Vanuatu and hosts Japan will take place between September 28 and October 4, with the winner booking their ticket to the West Indies.

Europe's originally scheduled Division 2 event was cancelled following extensive consultation with participating members, as the only available window for hosting did not provide a suitable environment for the staging of an international pathway event, said ICC in the media release. ICC further stated that all events are subject to Covid-19 arrangements if required at that time. (IANS)

Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy to begin from January 10

NEW DELHI

INDIA'S domestic season is set to kick off with the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy, which is set to take place from January 10 to 31, Board of Control for Cricket in India secretary Jay Shah said in an e-mail to all state units on Sunday.

The decision to start the domestic season with the T20 trophy was taken after taking into account suggestions from associations on which tournament they would prefer playing amid

the coronavirus pandemic.

The venue for the tournament is yet to be finalised and the board has currently asked players to assemble at their respective venues on January 2.

"The BCCI will subsequently seek further feedback from members on organising any other domestic tournament/tournaments and a decision will be taken after the group stage of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy," Shah further said in the communication with the state units. (IANS)

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