

degrees Celsius on Saturday. According to the IMD, a "cold day" is when the minimum temperature is less than 10 degrees Celsius and the maximum is at least 4.4 degrees Celsius below the normal. A "severe" cold day is when the maximum temperature is at least 6.5 notches below the normal.

Womenia

Bringing smiles on the faces

TEJAL SINHA

What can be more peaceful than celebrating your special day by bringing smiles on someone's face? This Hyderabad based techie is one-stop solution who can connect you to any cause and bring a smile on the face of the less fortunate.

Priya who is basically from Uttar Pradesh and has been in the city for the past seven years for her work, wishes to give back to the society whatever she has in the form of smiles for those who are not as fortunate as us. With this aim, Priya started an initiative called 'Cause for Celebration' in September 2018 to impact 200 orphans. With each passing time, she and her team have impacted over 10,000 people till date with the help of around 10 volunteers.

Priya shares, "I am associated with various projects that help change society and have more than 10 years of experience in volunteering, planning and event organising, ideation session experience into the social sector. The causes that are very close to my heart are climate action, women safety and child development. Cause for Celebration is an ambition and drive to serve, empower and uplift the underprivileged section of the society and bring joy and happiness in their lives through our mutual desires to help, connect, love and be loved."

Cause for Celebration aims that no-one should go deprived of basic amenities, love and care. They wish to make education, food, health, self

Pallavi Priya, a software engineer by profession is on a mission to bring smiles on the faces of the unprivileged and the less fortune ones



leagues used to approach me whenever they wanted to make any contribution for a social cause. I experienced that people want to do some social service but they don't know where to start, which NGO to donate or many have time constraints so they prefer supporting monetarily. This has motivated me to come up with 'Cause for Celebration' in Sep, 2018 on my birthday. There is always a 'Cause' to 'Celebrate' your special days. I just created a facebook page and started putting a cause on it whenever I come across any needy. To my surprise I received a very good response and people started getting associated."

They have been conducting these activities in slum areas, on streets, orphanages, rural areas and government schools. By the end of its first year, the initiatives were spread to various cities and districts in Telangana, Andhra and Delhi/NCR.

The ECO-warrior

Priya has always been a nature lover and enjoyed serene, scenic beauty. Recalling about her childhood she says, "I remember me, my siblings was very concerned on not littering on public places,

judiciously utilising resources like switching off fans, lights always when not in use, kitchen gardening and composting. I believe people are part of the development process of any nation and change starts from us. Govt. is doing their job and we have to do ours. There is a lot of scope of changing our lifestyle and making it a sustainable one. It just needs a little conscious effort from our end and individual efforts collectively create a bigger impact."

Priya says that she avoids the use of single use plastic in her daily life as much as possible and use jute or cloth bag. She shares, "I carry my own copper/steel bottle while going outside, I use bamboo toothbrush, I avoid plastic cutlery, reuse the waste plastic for plantation, installing art pieces. Last year I kept a stall of eco friendly products at Taruni Fair. In my social work also I try to be as eco-friendly as possible. Like using public transport while going for donations, or car pooling, reusing the donation bags, avoiding plastics. I have been running green campaigns and initiatives on social media like #sustainablelockdownchallenge, #gogreenchallenge, #bestoutofwaste to name a few. My initiatives were also registered on UN's website as part of their world environment day event."

Activities undertaken by the organisation

1. Sponsoring school and transport fees of orphans and slum children
2. Girl Child Education, Self-defense classes for girls
3. Benches/Notebooks/stationery items donations in Govt. schools, orphanage
4. Festival excursions for orphanage, Gift a Wish-Fulfilling individual wishes of specially-abled children, orphans
5. Organising health checkup camps, providing medicines for orphanage
6. Clothes, footwear, blanket, umbrella distribution on streets
7. Vocational training, dance classes, storytelling, fun activities in govt. schools, orphanage
8. Groceries, sweets, fruits distribution to migrant workers
9. Biodegradable Sanitary pads distribution, menstrual hygiene sessions to lower income communities women
10. Phones/Laptop distribution to slum kids for on-line education
11. Creating employment opportunities for the poor to help them earn livelihood

Sponsoring food in slums



Best fashion tips of all times

When you are out and about, the goal is to look so fabulous that you turn heads your way while walking down the street. However, there is a distinct business as usual that goes past accomplishing this consistently. On certain days you simply realise how to spruce up right while on others you are in a situation. Well women, here are a couple of design tips for you that will act the hero each time you remain before the mirror with a confounded

look all over. Prepare to be blown away. These will never become unpopular.

Confidence

This is the best thing a lady can wear. On the off chance that you are sure about the garments that you are wearing, at that point consequently it will make you look stylish regardless of whether the pieces that you are wearing are not especially in pattern. Ensure you stroll with your head held high and it is

sufficient for you to make look like a diva.

Pop of colour

Adding a fly of shading has a ton of effect to your monochrome outfit. This could be as a brilliant hued pack or intense frill or even a couple of red stilettos.

Accessorize with a scarf

All it takes is a knot to transform a plain and boring outfit into a livelier one. Wearing a scarf around your

neck is one of the easiest ways that is going to make you look stylish. And it's versatile too! You could wrap one around your neck while you are wearing a summery flowy dress or even while you are wearing a plain tee with a pair of denim.

Denim is always in

One can never turn out badly with a denim piece. Be it denim overalls, explanation pants or a larger than usual denim coat, every one of them

will make you look chic whenever combined with the correct sort of embellishments. Subsequently, consistently make a point to put resources into a couple of denim pieces.

Get yourself some heels

Who doesn't adore heels? Despite the fact that they may sting inevitably, excellence is torment. They will make you look taller as well as trendier. You can wear boots under shorts or some pants, stilettos or siphons under a dress. So essentially there is a couple of heels for each outfit.

Your outerwear matters

Covers and coats are bits of

garments that can say something. So be cautious while getting one. You need to search for a piece that is adaptable, agreeable, stylish and reasonable for the season which is sufficient to make you stick out. For summers, you can attempt shrugs and capes to add panache to your look.

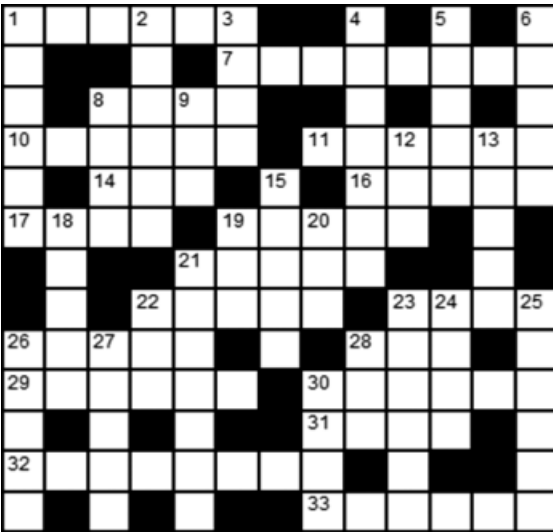
Makeup can make a world of difference

In the event that your cosmetics doesn't go with your outfit, at that point the unforgiving truth is that the entire look that you painstakingly set up will go to squander. Continuously make sure that

your cosmetics and outfit praise one another. On the off chance that you are a cosmetics addict, at that point you will know precisely what I mean.

Go casual chic

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SOLUTION TO DECEMBER 19

CROSSWORD

Across

- 1 Wreck (6)
- 7 Supplanters (8)
- 8 Misfortunes (4)
- 10 On the water (6)
- 11 Prairie wolf (6)
- 14 Little devil (3)
- 16 Ballots (5)
- 17 Seize (4)
- 19 Group of witches (5)
- 21 A Russian boy's name (5)
- 22 Strong rope (5)
- 23 Printed volume (4)
- 26 Indian rice dish (5)
- 28 Brewer's fermenting vat (3)
- 29 Occurring every sixty minutes (6)
- 30 Enrico ____, operatic tenor (6)
- 31 Monkeys (4)
- 32 Fathers and Sons author (8)
- 33 Outfits, supplies or rigs (6)

Down

- 1 Render harmless (6)
- 2 Self-possession (6)
- 3 Deadly sin (4)
- 4 Furrows or ruts (7)
- 5 Storage center (5)
- 6 Small islands (5)
- 8 Romulus kin (4)
- 9 In the ____ of luxury: very well off ? (3)
- 12 Hither's partner (3)
- 13 Musical speed (5)
- 15 The earth and the people who live on it (5)
- 18 Proportion (5)
- 19 Male swan (3)
- 20 Contend (3)
- 21 Refused to comply (7)
- 22 Automobile (3)
- 23 Writing desk (6)
- 24 Burden of responsibility (4)
- 25 Criticizes (6)
- 26 Snap (5)
- 27 Pecuniary gain as motive ? (5)
- 28 A light blow (3)
- 30 Primitive dwelling (4)

SUDOKU



SOLUTION TO DECEMBER 19

NEWS ROUNDUP

Designer Ritu Kumar launches 'Equally Beautiful' campaign

PUJA GUPTA

Diversity of faith and gender are woven into the fabric of this country. India has long been a tolerant land with free-

dom of belief, practice and love.

Resonant with the belief in diversity, Ritu Kumar presents a photo essay shot by acclaimed photographer Bikramjit Bose and actor Zoya Hussain. The campaign 'Equally Beautiful' features poignant yet powerful images of Zoya as she would appear in different faiths - a simple image and very truthful.

Speaking about the campaign Managing Director Amr-

ish Kumar says: "We derive our strength from the diversity of our people. Our textile traditions are an amalgamation of crafts of all faiths. We believe that we are all created equally

and we stand for our freedom of expression."

The campaign has been launched across brand stores, social media platforms and OOH hoarding in Delhi NCR.



RITU KUMAR

TWEET PATROL



ISHA KOPPIKAR
@ISHAKONNECTS

Scottish lassie
Happy Sunday guys!!



Things to keep in mind before you splurge on your beauty products

Women love beauty and that means indulging in all things beauty, but are it always worth the price? Yes and no. The most exciting thing about beauty is the experiment; you have the capability to see what works for you. This is where the money comes into play, and sometimes commercial products just don't cut it.

Jaya, beauty expert at Greyon Cosmetics LLP says, "We know it's Christmas time, and you can't hold back when the world's best offers are knocking at your digital screens. But, wait! Consider these few steps to invest in your favorite beauty products before going all out and purchasing them."

Seal before deal

This is truly a no-brainer. But in the excitement of getting your product, you might easily end up overlooking this step. Make sure all your products have a proper company seal on them to ensure they're authentic and haven't been used before.

Expiration date

Check the expiration date of your products, especially the skincare ones. Beyond the expiration date, the product can either lose its potency or get spoilt altogether. It can even get infected with bacteria and cause serious damage

to your skin. The expiration date is usually mentioned on the seal or the label.

Know your skin type

Whether dry, oily, having blackhead, having whitehead, or any other permutation and combination of these, knowing your skin type is absolutely crucial for you to make an informed decision



Read about the ingredient

If you're seriously looking to improve your skin quality, or if you're allergic to certain ingredients, researching and reading the labels can help prevent many a disaster. Certain acids may be too strong for your skin, while certain oils can be too saturated. It's best to know your products inside-out to ace your beauty game.

High cost, low satisfaction

Just because something is expensive, it doesn't imply that it's best suited for you. For example, an affordable toner like rose water might benefit your skin more than an expensive one. When buying a product, leave it to your skin to make all the decisions.

Don't blindly follow a trend

So, your favorite brand is out with a new innovative product that you must have. Hold on and ask yourself, 'do you really need it?' Sometimes we tend to over-do our skincare routines because of the overpowering solutions to challenges that brands claim to address. Makeup trends often nudge us to buy obnoxious products that we never really use. So, before you empty your wallet, think, and sleep over it. And then, if you really need that new miracle eyelash separator, go ahead, no-one's judging!

Congress, in need of a new RaGa

Rahul Gandhi is expected to return to the post after a brief period of voluntary exile. But the big question is can he show the grit and stamina to rough it out and rebuild the party?

No matter how robust a person in power is, he needs a strong opposing force to temper his shortcomings, challenge him to improve, and check an inveterate situation. Can Rahul be that robust person? What is the way forward for Congress?

The expectations were high when Rahul Gandhi first became the party president after the defeat of the Congress party in 2019. Despite losing power, the situation in the party was not so disappointing. The grand old party was in power in six states and if the party rank and file was strengthened, it could have perhaps been on a come back trial. But it had witnessed series of defeats in election after election as it had failed to go to

the people with issues related to the masses and take up struggle on their behalf.

While there is nothing wrong in using technology to maximum advantage and utilising social media for publicity is the buzz word these days, depending purely on social media and not going into the people is not a wise strategy. Rahul Gandhi is known for shooting off accusatory tweets against Prime Minister Narendra Modi, but did not take it up on a mission mode to take on the BJP-led government and did not show the kind of commitment that was required to revive the party. As a result, it has virtually slipped into state of coma.

This resulted in the BJP filling the vacuum. Narendra Modi and Amit Shah are leaving no space for the Opposition, even though there are several issues which need to be taken up, including the economic downturn, Covid-19, new farm acts and China. If Rahul becomes the party president again, he needs to display a new RG, get over the internal politics, hit the streets and raise issues to win the confidence of the people. The time for thinking on synergy of old and new is over. If he starts the exercise to revive party's future from this point, he would be losing time and party will have to face disappointment as the country is likely to see first

joint elections from Parliament to local bodies towards the end of 2022.

No strategy, including PR strategies, will succeed unless there is strong organisation on the ground. The party organisation in almost all the states has become weak. In states like Punjab where it has won, it was more because of the local leaders and not because of the national leaders of the party. This may sound harsh to those who have soft corner towards Congress party, but this is the reality. Any political party should not only have a strong leader at the helm of affairs, but its commanders in states too should be equally strong who can create a strong base at the ground level. Instead, if it follows the old practice of having a club of English-speaking urban elites, the party will succeed only on social media or in elders house in Parliament, but will have no base on the ground or rigour to win over the hearts of the masses, who constitute 70 per cent of the voters. What is necessary is not just a scion from the Gandhi-Nehru family, but a real charismatic and energetic leader who can create strong, vibrant state units and steer it back to power or at least emerge as a very strong opposition which is the need of the day.



Bihar scrapped APMC Act, mandi system 14 years ago; here's what it did to farmers

C K MANOJ

THE recent controversy about India's newly minted farm laws have brought back into focus what Nitish Kumar did a decade-and-a-half ago: Shutting down the mandi (wholesale markets for agricultural produce) system in 2006.

The much-touted 'reform' has impacted the state's farmers, and not in a good way. Farmers have had to sell their produce to private procurers at throwaway prices.

Kumar's government repealed the Agriculture Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) Act in Bihar months after assuming chief ministership (in 2005). For 14 years now, experts said, farmers have not had a favourable market for their produce.

Yet, their anger didn't spill out on the streets. The same experts ascribe that to a lack of awareness and little unity. About 97 per cent of the state's agricultural community comprise either marginal or small farmers — those who are hardly left with a surplus to sell.

Even after the Narendra Modi government at the Centre brought in three controversial laws and amended the Essential Commodities Act, protests have been far low key in the state compared to several other parts.

Economist DM Diwakar said: "The Modi government says the new farm bills won't adversely impact the farming community. Given the logic, the financial condition of 94 per cent of farmers in Bihar — who didn't go to mandis or were not covered under minimum support price (MSP) — should have improved in the past 14 years. But their condition has deteriorated."

Paddy has sold for Rs 900-1,000 a quintal in Bihar, almost half the Rs 1,868 fixed by the Centre as MSP, alleged the former director of Patna-based AN Sinha Institute of Social Studies. Nearly half the farmers can't even recover their investments, he added.

Farmers earlier sold their crops through vyaapaar mandals (trading bodies), an expert said; only a few could reach the markets, but those who did got proper rates. Market yards also provided space to farmers to dry up paddy and other produces if they had moisture.

"Before the scrapping of the APMC Act, farmers would sell their produce to the market committees where minimum price was guaranteed. But after the repeal of this system, they indulged in distress sale lest their produce would go to waste because they had no storage facility," said economist Abdul Qadir.

He added that farming has turned out to be a non-viable profession in Bihar over time. "Farmers from Bihar have now been working as labourers in Punjab and Haryana," he said.

Farmers have been pushed to the brink after the revocation of the APMC Act, said Baliram Sharma, who earlier headed vyaapaar mandal.

"Farming is a source of livelihood for a majority of farmers in Bihar. They sell their produce to pay education fees of their children, buy medicines or arrange weddings for their daughters. They are compelled to sell their farm produce to local petty traders at throwaway prices to meet their family requirements," said Sharma, who also served as the director of Magadh Central Cooperative Bank Ltd.

The primary agricultural credit society (PACS) would mostly refuse to buy paddy from farmers citing moisture, but since they urgently needed money, they would sell it to local traders at low prices. Late payments further prompted them to sell their produce elsewhere.

"In 1968-69, wheat was sold at Rs 76 a quintal while the salary of a schoolteacher was Rs 70-80. That meant a teacher would not be able to buy a quintal of wheat from his one-month salary. In the past five decades, a teacher's salary has climbed to average Rs 70,000, but wheat price is only around Rs 2,000 a quintal," Sharma said.

Agriculture experts said the procurement rates of paddy and wheat in Bihar were roughly eight and one respectively. "Farmers have become compromising in Bihar since the average local holding size is 0.9 hectare. Farming is not entrepreneurship, but a source of livelihood," said agricultural expert Ranjan Sinha.

Sinha added that the scrapping of APMC Act did not largely impact the Bihar farmers since a majority of them are marginal and small farmers.

"A majority of farmers skipped mandis in the past and are doing it today as well. Why would they go there when they don't have any surplus produce?" asked Sinha.

He said the marketing committees were the centre of corruption and the government did the right thing by repealing the Act. According to him, just one per cent farmers in the state come under large category while only three per cent fell in the middle category.

Several farmers said they did not get the cost of their produce, making it difficult for them to repay the loan. "I invested Rs 12,000 in farming this season but got only Rs 8,000 after selling paddy. I incurred a loss of Rs 4,000," said Naresh Murmu, a farmer from Jami district.

He sold 10 quintals of paddy at Rs 1,050 a quintal against the MSP of Rs 1,868.

Another farmer, Somnath Singh from east Champaran, said they run into huge losses every year since there is no unity among farmers and because they lack awareness about the farm laws.

"Earlier, we would get a good price for our produce but the situation has deteriorated after the abolishment of the APMC Act. The PACS simply refuse to buy our produce citing moisture; even if they procure them, they take months to pay the dues," said Singh.

Lack of storage facilities has dealt another blow to farmers who are compelled to dispose of their goods. "We sold potatoes and onions roughly between Rs 8-10 per kilogram to the local businessmen who are now selling our produce at Rs 50 and Rs 70 respectively. This happened because we have no space to store our produce," Singh said.

Kishore Jaiswal, convener of Pragatisheel Krishi Manch, said the scrapping of APMC Act in Bihar has very systematically reduced the then infrastructure of market yards and a major facility to farmers to get good rate for their produce. "Farmers are just battling for survival," he said.

But this has happened in a state where more than 70 per cent of the population is engaged in agricultural operations. According to a report of Bihar Economic Survey, economic activities in Bihar are closely linked to development of agriculture and allied sectors for its significant links with food and nutritional security.

Not only does this sector augment food supply, it also generates employment opportunities, improves livelihood opportunities, and causes poverty alleviation.

(Courtesy: Down To Earth)

THE WAY AHEAD



Dr Bharat Jhunjunwala

The West and Islam are at loggerheads with each other. This is unfortunate because both are fundamentally egalitarian ideologies. The French Revolution of 1789 was anchored on the slogan "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity." Yet, the French people enslaved large part of North Africa in the nineteenth century—after the French Revolution-- and perpetuated a number atrocities on those people. They applied "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" to the French people and not to the Africans.

Similarly, Abraham Lincoln abolished slavery in the United States. Yet, the United States today has been aggressively promoting the interest of its multinational corporations leading to wealth for the West and poverty of the East. It introduced the Patents Acts in the World Trade Organisation. Previously, India was free to copy to make a product invented by an American multinational corporation as long as the Indian copier did not use the same process to make the product as used by the American inventor. Before the introduction of the Patents Act in the WTO, an Indian pharma company could make the Pfizer vaccine for Covid-19 as long as it used a different process than used by Pfizer to make the vaccine.

To give another example, it is reported that the cost of production of Windows Software by Microsoft is only one US Dollar whereas Microsoft is selling it at about 10 dollars per piece. Indian software companies cannot copy the Windows Software due the Patents Act. This kind of profiteering is leading to poverty of the developing countries and richness of the Western countries.

We find the same anomaly in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations in 1948 at the behest of the developed countries. Article 31 says, "Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State." Question is this: Why should the freedom of movement be restricted within "each State" when the rights enshrined in the Declaration are "universal?" Why the Declaration does not implement "Equality" and "Fraternity" between all humanity? Similarly, Article 21 (2) says, "Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country." Question is this: Why access to services only

in "his country" if we are a common humanity? Why should public services of humanity not be shared across all peoples? In this way, the West has established democracy and equality within in its own countries, but espoused inequality and exploitation vis-a-vis in the developing countries.

Indeed, there are exceptions to this rule. Winston Churchill had gone to the United States to meet President Theodore Roosevelt during the Second World War seeking American assistance. Roosevelt had put the condition that England would have to give freedom to her colonies as a quid pro quo for American support. That was a great contribution of United States to the welfare of the people of world. The United States had also granted food aid under PL-480 law when India was facing a severe drought in the sixties. However, these exceptions do not obviate the larger exploitative tendency of the West.

The situation gets flipped in Islam. Equality between countries is accepted. Ayat 17:60 of the Quran says, "And [remember, O Muhammad], when we told you, indeed, your Lord has encompassed the people." This Ayat applies to whole humanity. There is no division between the people that have been "encompassed." The Lord encompasses the Arabic, American, European, Pagan, Atheists and all other people. The basic tenor of the Quran is global. The Quran brings Allah's message to the whole humanity; not to a section of it. In my reading, Allah does not even tolerate any distinction even between believers and non-believers in the Prophet. A person may believe in Allah and in another Prophet, not Prophet Mohammad. The Quran accepts the Jews and Christians as people of the book even though they do not honour Prophet Mohammad. Unfortunately, Islam has transformed itself into an exploitative society despite this universalism.

Furthermore, Prophet Muhammad lived a very simple life. The first two Imams—Abu Bakr and Oman—also lived simple lives. However, the third Imam Othman transformed the situation entirely. Leslie Hazelton author of "After the Prophet" says that Othman "built palaces in Medina with enclosed gardens, marble columns, and imported food and chefs. He began to give away vast private state to his relatives some with thousands of horses and as many slaves." In this way, the egalitarian ideology of the Quran was transformed into a deep social inequality within the Islamic countries and this continues to this day. The palaces of Saudi Arabia



Two ideologies that are both egalitarian as well as universal, have both espoused inequality in different ways. West has tried to secure equality within the country, but exploited other people. Islam, on the other hand, has tried to secure equality between countries, but exploited its own peoples. The way forward is for both the West and Islam to reform themselves. Only then, we will have peace and welfare as declared by the French Revolution and the Quran

smack of unparalleled luxury while even Muslim people of Nigeria are starving. In Pakistan, two million people are living today as bonded labour—this within an Islamic country. Number of reports tell of "slave wives" being "wed" by Saudi Royals. So, Islam with an egalitarian ideology has been transformed into an internally unequal and exploitative society. It must be noted and honoured though that Islam has not made military war against other countries like France or economic wars against other countries like the United States has done.

Here again we have exceptions to the rule. Iraq made war against Kuwait. The Rohingyas are considered to have made war against the State of Myanmar. A number of Islamic organizations are openly advocating Jihad against other countries. A difference from France and United States, however, is that these wars are being made for religious objectives, not for economic exploitation.

We have in front of us a strange spectacle. Two ideologies that are both egal-

itarian as well as universal, have both espoused inequality in different ways. West has tried to secure equality within the country, but exploited other people. Islam, on the other hand, has tried to secure equality between countries, but exploited its own peoples. The way forward is for both the West and Islam to reform themselves. Only then, we will have peace and welfare as declared by the French Revolution and the Quran.

As an endnote, we in India must remind ourselves that we basically suffer from the same ills as Islam. The caste system still prevails in large parts of the country although we have expunged it from our Constitution. Economic inequality between the rich and the poor has been increasing at a regular pace since the Independence. It has increased exponentially under the present NDA government that is ideologically driven by the Hindu texts. Thus, like Islam, Hindus must also reform themselves to espouse internal equality.

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

AP rural landscape set to change

THE State government feels that the rural landscape of Andhra Pradesh will change in the coming days with 10,641 Rythu Bharosa Kendras (RBKs) serving the farmers at village level from supplying seeds to marketing and also procuring the agricultural produce. Janata Bazars and English medium schools along with village secretariats are going to be the hub of activity in rural areas.

The Chief Minister, YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, who completes 48 years on Monday is all set to travel the extra mile for creating a welfare state. Being a farmer-friendly government, it had focussed in ensuring that the farmers get input subsidy, crop insurance, Rythu Bharosa in three instalments with enhanced amount, Minimum Support Price and soft loans which strengthens agriculture sector and the Market Stabilisation Fund to take care of price fluctuations. Farmers could not have asked for more, it feels.

Jagan's initiative of YSR Cheyutha and YSR Aasara to empower women (45-60 years) belonging to the weaker sections has gained him accolades from the masses.

Apart from the welfare activities, he has taken important decisions like reverse tendering and appointing a Commission for Judicial Preview, putting Lok Ayukta in place, decentralisation of administration with Visakhapatnam as the Executive Capital, Amaravati the Legislative Capital, and Kurnool the Judicial Capital which has made the opposition parties feel jittery about their existence. Jagan had taken decision for decentral-

isation of administration after learning a lesson taught by Hyderabad, and felt that all development should not be concentrated at one place.

He has displayed his entrepreneurship skills in dairy, grocery, and other chosen fields which has got the back up of banks, supported by giant companies like AMUL, Procter and Gamble, ITC, Allana Group, Reliance among others, is a reflection of his commitment to uplift the poor economically and socially. As testimony for political

empowerment, he has provided 50 per cent reservation for women and weaker sections in nominated posts and nominated works.

The hallmarks of Jagan Mohan Reddy's government is determination and stubbornness in carrying out the governance with transparency and has been rolling out welfare schemes, more than what was promised in the manifesto.

(With inputs from CMO).



CM to arrive on 3-day visit to Kadapa dist on Dec 23

- ▶ He will inaugurate a village secretariat, Rythu Bharosa Kendra and YSR Village Clinic at Marellamadaka village in Chakrayapet mandal
- ▶ Jagan will pay respects to his father late Y S Rajasekhara Reddy at YSR Memorial at Idupulapaya on Dec 25 and later take part in Christmas celebrations at the CSI Church at Pulivendula

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KADAPA

CHIEF Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy will tour Kadapa district for three days from December 23 to 25. The district administration is making the necessary arrangements for the tour.

This is the second time the Chief Minister is visiting the



Collector Ch Harikiran holding a meeting with officials on the Chief Minister's tour in Kadapa on Sunday

district during the pandemic. Earlier, he visited Idupulapaya on September 2 to pay tributes to his father Y S Rajasekhara Reddy at the YSR Memorial at Idupulapaya.

According to District Collector Ch Harikiran, during his visit to the district, the Chief Minister will inaugurate a village secretariat, Rythu Bharosa Kendra and YSR Village Clinic, which

were constructed on the same premises in Marellamadaka village of Chakrayapet mandal and address a public meeting. On the same day, he will lay foundation stone for the construction of a new bus depot, Apachi leather unit and an Industrial Development Park in Pulivendula town.

On December 25, he will pay tributes to his father late Y S Rajasekhara Reddy at YSR Me-

morial in Idupulapaya and later participate in the Christmas celebrations at the CSI Church in Pulivendula town.

The district administration is taking all precautions ahead of Jagan's visit. Covid tests are being conducted for the officials who will be meeting the Chief Minister. Volunteers have been appointed to collect Spandana petitions from people.

SECRETARIAT TO BE BUILT ON GOVT LAND

- ▶ Not a single cent of private land will be acquired for the purpose, says MP V Vijayasai Reddy
- ▶ Plays Naidu's regime for not taking any action against the land-grabbers
- ▶ Says once the report of SIT on Vizag Land Scam is received, it will be brought to the notice of people

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VISAKHAPATNAM

IN the process of making Visakhapatnam as executive capital, Rajya Sabha member MP V Vijayasai Reddy said not even a single cent of private land will be acquired.

Speaking at the circuit house here on Sunday, the MP said the secretariat will be built on the government land.

As a part of the exercise, the occupied lands are now being recovered by the government, the



Rajya Sabha MP V Vijayasai Reddy speaking to reporters in Visakhapatnam on Sunday

MP reiterated.

Though the government lands were grabbed by the TDP leaders during N Chandrababu Naidu's regime, no action was initiated by the then government, he said.

However, the YSRCP government is keen on safeguarding government lands and considering concrete measures to recover them, Vijayasai said.

The MP assured long pending issues in the district, including the ones related to Simhachalam Devasthanam and Gajuwaka House Committee, will be sorted

out at the earliest.

"Once the Special Investigation Team's (SIT) report is submitted to the government, the report will be brought to the notice of the public," the MP added.

Speaking on the occasion, Tourism Minister M Srinivasa Rao questioned the TDP chief whether action should be initiated against those grabbing government lands or not.

Further, the Minister appealed to the MP to accord nominated posts to hard-working leaders and activists of the party.

CLEARING ENCROACHMENTS

Properties under the possession of TDP leaders recovered

- The value of properties reportedly seized from the TDP leaders in Visakhapatnam district is said to be about Rs 300 crore

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VISAKHAPATNAM

AS a part of clearing encroached lands, the Revenue Department officials recovered some of the properties under the possession of Visakhapatnam East TDP MLA Velagapudi Ramakrishna Babu and Anakapalle former MLA Peela Govind Satyanarayana here on Sunday.

A portion of 'gedda' in Rushikonda (Survey No: 21) about six cents that was under the possession of Ramakrishna Babu and while a part of the land at Anandapuram mandal, GD Palem (Survey No: 156) belonging to Govind was recovered by



Warning board set up at Anakapalle former MLA Peela Govind Satyanarayana's land in Visakhapatnam on Sunday

the officials concerned.

According to the revenue officials, 60 acres of government land was recovered from Govind. An inquiry will be conducted on the violation of norms and the D-Form patta land which is under the possession of Govind.

The value of properties thus seized from the TDP leaders is said to be approximately Rs 300 crore.

In the month of October, the officials demolished a part of the residence of former MP and TDP leader Sabbam Hari. It was followed by clearing the encroachment land of GITAM's properties.

Similarly, the officials took over the government land belonging to Visakhapatnam North MLA Ganta Srinivasa Rao near Adavivaram village, Simhachalam.

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

TDP national president and former Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has expressed deep shock over the ghastly incident in Ongole in which a physically challenged girl was burnt to death under suspicious circumstances.

Naidu demanded a high-level probe to find out whether the hapless ward volunteer was murdered or raped and then murdered. Suspicions were rising as post-mortem was not conducted till Saturday evening though she was burnt alive at 8.30 pm on Friday itself.

In a statement here, the TDP chief demanded that the government explain why there was a delay of over 20 hours in conducting post-mortem. The parents had to wait for 20 hours at the hospital to receive the girl's body. A detailed probe should be held and stringent punishment should be given to those



TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu wonders why the post-mortem was not conducted till Saturday evening when unidentified miscreants killed and burnt the woman on Friday itself

responsible for the brutal death.

Naidu said that till now there was no safety to the lives of Dalits, tribals, BCs and Muslim Minorities in the State, but now on, even the disabled girls and women were falling victims.

All corners of the State were witnessing suspicious deaths, murders, rape and murder cases and such atrocities. The ghastly incidents were only on the rise for the past 19 months under the Jagan Reddy regime.

The TDP chief said that Om Pratap's death was suspicious but the government did not disclose his call list despite demand from the Opposition leaders. Dalit youth Domathoti Vikram was brutally murdered in Gurazala in Guntur district. Even his call list was not revealed to the public. Now, a physically challenged girl was burnt alive in Ongole in Prakasam district. The investigating officials should disclose her call list at least in order to

bring out the facts. Naidu said that if such atrocities were dealt with a firm hand in the beginning itself, they would not have repeated like this again and again. The law and order would not have deteriorated to such an extent. It was a sheer failure on the part of the State government for not gathering evidence to catch the culprits. The YSRCP regime's negligence was posing a severe threat to the lives of people all over the State.

Naidu termed it as painful to see that women were not able to move out in public with safety and security. The State had seen how a Dalit minor girl was gang-raped in Rajahmundry. Atrocities were committed in Udayagiri and Chandragiri.

Hundreds of atrocities were committed on women alone in the past 18 months under the present regime. These incidents reflect the prevailing terrifying and horrifying atmosphere in the State.

438 new cases in State

- Two deaths reported and toll increases to 7,076

AMARAVATI

ANDHRA Pradesh reported 438 fresh coronavirus cases, 589 recoveries and two deaths in 24 hours ending 9 am on Sunday. The State's Covid-19 chart now showed 8,78,723 total positives, 8,67,445 recoveries and 7,076 deaths.

The latest bulletin said the number of active cases now came down to 4,202. So far, 1.12 crore sample tests were completed at the rate of 2.10 lakh per million population that turned out an overall infection positivity rate of 7.80 per cent.

The recovery rate touched 98.72 per cent while the mortality rate remained stable at 0.81 per cent.

Krishna and Chittoor continued to report more cases afresh everyday while all other districts have been adding less than 50 each.

Chittoor also reported one more Covid-19 death in 24 hours along with SPS Nellore, according to the bulletin.

'FELT BLESSED'

Continued from P1

"This morning, I prayed at the historic Gurudwara Rakabganj Sahib, where the pious body of Sri Guru Teg Bahadur Ji was cremated. I felt extremely blessed. I, like millions around the world, am deeply inspired by the kindnesses of Sri Guru Teg Bahadur Ji," Modi tweeted after the visit.

Guru Tegh Bahadur's death anniversary was observed on Saturday. The mortal remains of Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Sikh Guru, were consigned to flames at Gurudwara Rakabganj. "Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's life epitomised courage and compassion. On his Shaheed Diwas, I bow to the great Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji and recall his vision for a just and inclusive society," Modi had tweeted on Saturday.

Amaravati centrally located, it should remain as capital: JSP

Party activists to stage dharnas at Collectorates across State on Dec 28 in support of agitating farmers

HANS NEWS SERVICE
RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM

JANA Sena Party (JSP) Political Affairs Committee chairman Nadendla Manohar has said that the party extends its support to Amaravati as State capital and there is no second thought on it.

Speaking to reporters here on Sunday, he said the party right from the beginning has been demanding that Amaravati should remain as capital, as it is centrally located in the State.

Meanwhile, the JSP will take a decision after discussing within the party over the relocation of High Court to



Jana Sena Party leader Nadendla Manohar addressing the media in Rajamahendravaram on Sunday

Kurnool, he said. The senior JSP leader said that the YSRCP government miserably failed to fulfill the demands of the farming community in the State and its shattered their dreams.

The JSP will organise dharnas at Collectorates across the State on December 28 expressing

solidarity with the agitating farmers and protesting the failure of the State and Central governments in addressing the problems of the farmers, he said.

Manohar said the JSP always stands by people and fights for resolution of their issues.

Congress begins reshuffle in TS, 3 other States

Continued from P1

The newly appointed secretaries will assist the general secretaries in-charge of the two states — Jitendra Singh for Assam and Tariq Anwar for Kerala. ON Saturday, Sonia Gandhi, her son Rahul Gandhi and daughter Priyanka Gandhi Vadra met the Congress dissidents in a first of a series of meetings to be held over the next 10 days. The meeting was the first step towards reconciliation after months of internal feud over the leadership issue.

Kamal Nath, former chief minister of Madhya Pradesh and state party chief, has reportedly played an important role in making the top leadership meet the 23 rebels who had triggered an apparent in-party crisis by writing to the Congress interim chief Sonia Gandhi in August with several demands.

While the top leadership agreeing to hold organizational elections — the Working Committee is to take the final call — Rahul Gandhi's statement at the meeting that he is "ready to work for the party as all desire" is seen as an indication of his return as the party chief.

On Friday, top Congress spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said most leaders in the

Congress wanted Rahul Gandhi to return as the Congress chief. The dissidents, however, had remained firm on holding elections for every post from top to bottom. In August, a group of 23 leaders had written an explosive letter, pointing to the drift in party leadership and said they wanted a full-time, "active and visible leadership" and collective decision-making.

Over the last few years, the Congress has suffered multiple electoral defeats and has even seen States where it formed governments — Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh — slip out of grip.

MP proposes barrage on Penna with ₹100 cr

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NELLORE

MP Adala Prabhakar Reddy said that there are proposals for constructing a barrage on the river Penna at Mudivarthi with Rs 100 crore. Inaugurating the water

plant constructed with a cost of Rs 25 lakh under MPLADS at Stove beedi colony in Kovvur town, Prabhakar Reddy said that the state government had sanctioned Rs 300 crore for irrigation projects in Kovur segment and the works would be taken up shortly. The MP

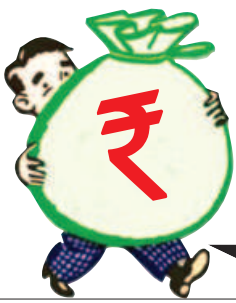
said they would develop the constituency in all aspects in the coming two years. He appreciated the efforts of Nallapureddy family for developing the constituency during their regime. Prabhakar Reddy said the village secretariat buildings were constructed with good quality. The MP also interacted with the locals and assured of resolving their issues.

The MP also inaugurated CC road in Subbareddypuram and laid foundation stone for the works of Veguru-Pallepalem road.





Risk more than others think is safe. Dream more than others think is practical
—Howard Schultz



HANS INVEST

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Mkts continue bull run amid positive cues

CHERUKURI KUTUMBA RAO

Fuelled by unabated FII inflows, expectations over the coronavirus aid package in the US, hints of negotiations between the UK and the European Union over a post-Brexit trade deal and positive domestic cues, the benchmark indices posted a seventh straight weekly gain, their longest winning streak since April last year. The BSE Sensex climbed 861.68 points or 1.87 per cent to 46,960.69 and the Nifty 50 rose 246.70 points to 1.83 per cent to 13,760.55, taking the total seven-week gains to over 18 per cent. Following the frontline indices, the broader markets also gained strength during the week, with the BSE mid-cap index rising 1.6 per cent and small-cap up 1.2 per cent.

In addition to over Rs 70,000 crore inflows in November, FIIs have invested around Rs 40,000 crore in Indian equities in December so far. The FII money has been acting as a key role in taking the market to record-high levels. Over the weekend during an Assocham event, Prime Minister Narendra Modi indicated that the controversial farm laws would not be repealed, saying farmers have started getting benefits of agricultural reforms. Observers say that the Indian economy is now growing at a slight margin over the previous financial year on a year-on-year basis, after showing a decline in the rate of India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) contraction in the second quarter of FY21. There are clear indications from the GoI that the government's asset monetisation and disinvestment drive will go on aggressively, particularly in sectors such as power, shipping, ports and warehouses. The near-

MARKET Khabrein



term direction of the markets will be dictated by FII inflows, currency movement, crude oil prices, developments on vaccine rollout and global cues. Avoid large-leveraged positions. Irrational exuberance was evident in pockets of market like the newly listed Burger King's share price tripled to its issue price.

The IPO's are subscribed as hot-cakes which can also be seen in the new Mrs Bectors Food Speciality, which subscribed 199x, highest since 2017. Irrational exuberance is the psychological basis of a speculative bubble.

Heard on the street

Bitcoin topped \$20,000 for the first time in its 12-year history. The digital currency's value has nearly tripled in 2020. Besides Bitcoins, other crypto currencies such as Etherium and Ripple are on an up-side. Bitcoin has begun to win mainstream acceptance this year. Investors, including Paul Tudor Jones and Stanley Druckenmiller and companies such as Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Co, or Mass-Mutual, have disclosed bitcoin holdings in the recent months. Other companies, including Square Inc, PayPal Holdings Inc and Robinhood Markets Inc have opened up their platforms to crypto trading. Reflecting the exuberance

in crypto currencies, Coinbase will be the first major bitcoin-focused company to test the public markets. It is the largest US-based crypto currency exchange by trading volume and one of the largest crypto exchanges in the world.

The Indian crypto trade has also witnessed something of a revival on the back of the global run-up, but investors are still wary of the government's plans on this sector. Industry insiders believe that regulations will make this a much more vibrant industry with more retail and institutional participation. Indian regulators have been extremely harsh on crypto trading platforms. While the RBI outright asked banks to stay away from dealing with crypto exchanges, the Central government, time and again, has spoken about crypto in a negative light.

Within the policy circles, private crypto currency has always been looked upon with suspicion. Overall crypto activity which picked up post the Supreme Court judgment in March 2020, is yet to see an explosion in India, industry insiders pointed out. The Apex Court had overturned the RBI's decision to bar banks from dealing with crypto businesses, thereby getting exchanges back in business. Multiple new exchanges have also sprung

up over the last few months. There are multiple crypto exchanges in the country like CoinDCX, Unocoin and WazirX. Indian traders can open digital wallets with these platforms, using 'INR' to buy Etherium, Bitcoin or other crypto currencies and then trade them on these exchanges.

Futures & options / sector watch

Reflecting the positive undercurrent in the cash segment, the derivative segment witnessed robust trading volumes. Bull strength was reflected in the Nifty closing above the 13,750-mark and the Bank Nifty also moving above the 30,700-mark. In the option segment, the maximum open interest in Call options was placed at 14,000 strike of approximately 33 lakh contracts and the 13,700 strike held the highest open interest for Put options of 23 lakh contracts. Fresh addition of calls was seen at 13,900 and 14,000 strikes; and fresh Put writing was seen at 13,500, 13,600, and 13,700 strikes.

The Implied Volatility (IV) of calls closed at 17.92 per cent while that for put options closed at 18.77. The Nifty VIX for the week closed at 19.16 per cent. PCR OI for the week closed at 1.98 indicates more puts writing than calls. Bias should remain in favour of bulls as far Nifty is holding above the 13500-mark. The overall option data indicates a broader range of 13,500-14,000 for the coming week.

The sector rotation in the markets is quite evident, with the traditionally defensive sectors like FMCG, consumption, pharma and IT looking up. With the liquidity fuelling the momentum, it would be prudent to approach the markets in a highly sector- and stock-specific manner. Adopting such an ap-

proach will help mitigate risks in the event of any broad consolidation happening in the markets. While avoiding both shorts and excessive leveraged exposures, a highly selective approach is advised over the coming week.

Taking cue from the results of global IT major Accenture, which indicates a robust tech upcycle, IT stocks witnessed strong buying interest ahead of the Q3 results. The vaccine progress continued to provide strong support to the equity markets globally. After some healthy consolidation, pharma counters were back in limelight. Use dips to buy Biocon, Cipla and Dr Reddy. Stock futures looking good for buying are Bajaj Auto, BEL, Cadila Healthcare, ICICI Bank, Infosys and Reliance Inds. Sell on rallies: Aurobindo Pharma, BPCL, Balakrishna Inds, PVR, Shriram Transport and UBL.

Stock picks

Filatex India Limited is engaged in the manufacture and trading of synthetic yarn and textiles. The company manufactures polyester and polypropylene multifilament yarn and polyester chips. Buy at current levels for target prices of Rs 65 (by the time of Q3 results) and Rs 85-90 (in 12 to 18 months).

NRB Bearings Limited is engaged in the manufacture of ball and roller bearing. NRB was the first company to manufacture needle roller bearings in India and has pioneered the leading edge of bearing technology, and today over 90 per cent of vehicles on Indian roads run on NRB parts. Buy on declines for target price of Rs 175 in the medium-term.

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

IN SHORT

Forex reserves down by \$778 mn

THE country's foreign exchange reserves declined by \$778 million to \$578.568 billion in the week to December 11, RBI data showed. In the previous week, the reserves had touched a lifetime high of \$579.346 billion after increasing by \$4.525 billion. In the reporting week, the reserves declined due to a fall in foreign currency assets (FCAs), a major component of the overall reserves. FCAs dropped by \$1.042 billion to \$536.344 billion, as per the weekly data by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). 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 forex reserves. The gold reserves increased by \$284 million in the reporting week to \$36.012 billion, the data showed. The special drawing rights (SDRs) with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) dipped by \$3 million to \$1.503 billion. The country's reserve position with the IMF also fell by \$16 million to \$4.709 billion.

Sebi's suggestion for startups

TO boost listing of startups, markets regulator Sebi has suggested relaxations in norms, including reducing holding period for pre-issue capital and allowing discretionary allotment to all eligible investors. The changes have been proposed to the framework for listing on Innovators Growth Platform (IGP), Sebi said in a statement. Other proposals include providing differential voting rights (DVR) to promoters, retaining superior voting rights (SR) for existing institutional investors holding over 10 per cent of capital and easing delisting requirements, as well as takeover norms. The regulator has issued a consultation paper in this regard and sought suggestions from public till January 11. Sebi has suggested reducing the period of holding of 25 per cent of pre-issue capital of the issuer company by eligible investors to one year from the current requirement of two years. On the lines of provisions for listing of companies on the main board, Sebi has proposed that "up to 60 per cent portion of the issue size may be allocated on a discretionary basis, prior to issue opening, to all eligible investors, provided there will be a lock-in of 30 days on such shares."

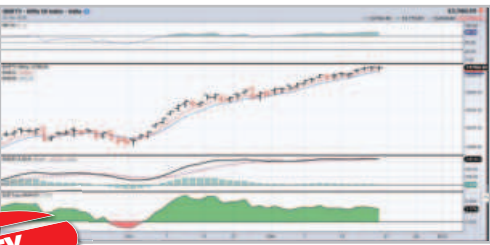
DRs holding norms for NRIs relaxed

MARKETS regulator Sebi on Friday gave certain relaxations to non-resident Indians in respect of holding of depository receipts (DRs) issued by India-listed companies. NRIs can now hold DRs issued by the company under the employee stock option schemes, bonus issue and rights issue, the regulator said. In October 2019, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) barred NRIs from buying DRs issued by India-listed companies. This restriction will not apply in the case of issue of DRs to NRIs, pursuant to share-based employee benefit schemes that are implemented by a company in terms of Sebi (Share Based Employee Benefits) rules, the regulator said in a circular on Friday. In addition, the restriction would also not apply in the case of issue of DRs by the company to NRIs following a bonus issue or a rights issue, it added. "Except as permitted under the provisos above, NRIs shall neither subscribe to any further issue of DRs nor make any further acquisition of DRs," Sebi clarified.

Go for stock-specific approach

THOVITI BRAHMACHARY

Equity benchmarks were higher for the seventh consecutive week. The Nifty gained 246.7 points or 1.83 per cent during the last week. BSE Sensex was also up by 1.87 per cent. With the expectations of the US stimulus package and the Covid vaccine, news flow improved the sentiments in the market. At the same time, unabated FII flows into the domestic market supported the rally to continue. The boarder market indices moved in tandem with the benchmarks. IT and pharma led the market rally during the week. FIIs pumped Rs 38,734.10 crore in December so far, while DIIs sold Rs 29,651.18 crore worth of equities. The Nifty formed another bullish candle on a weekly chart. It recorded all the positive days during the week. Even though it formed an indecisive Doji candle every day, every dip was used as a buying opportunity. The bias is still on the upside as a majority of the bars have long tails at the bottom, indicating buyer dominance, howsoever marginal that may be. The liquidity continued to pour into the market as there are no fresh negative triggers. The market retraced to 127.6 per cent of the previous fall and met the target of 13,788 almost on dot. The coming four-day week may lead to consolidation or more range-bound trading. The Nifty sustains above the short-term moving averages, 5EMA



and 8EMA. The support level inched up to the 13,669 and 13,595. Unless these levels are broken on a closing basis, the rally continued to be in motion. The Nifty continues to trade over 26 per cent above the 200DMA. The distance from the 20DMA is coming down. It is an indication of consolidation on the cards. The leading indicator RSI is in the extreme overbought condition in daily and weekly timeframes. It may remain in the overbought condition for some more periods unless the Nifty breaks the key supports. The MACD histogram is crawling on the zero line, indicating a lack of momentum. The MACD line and the signal line moving in a straight-line fashion is showing the overextended nature of the market. Weekly bars and weekly MACD show the consensus bias on the direction of the market. The ADX shows the extraordinary strength in the trend as it was in peaks. The positive momentum indicator is declining because of the indecisive bar on the price.

For the last seven days, the Nifty is forming identical indecisive candles, but failing to get the confir-

mations for a reversal. A Doji candle at the lifetime high requires the next candle closing below it for a reversal. These indecisive candles are not giving intraday opportunities. On a 75-minute chart, the Bollinger bands contracted and indicated an explosive on the cards. A close below 13,600 will create short euphoria on the downside. In these conditions, continue the long positions with a trailing stop loss, and get ready for an unexpected move.

The Nifty price earnings ratio reached to 37.84, the highest ever level ever. Even if the earnings grow at a double-digit rate, the rally may not be sustained. It may correct to a reasonable valuation zone. The sector rotation is perfectly going on and the traditional defence sectors like FMCG, pharma and IT indices were in the limelight last week. It would be prudent to approach the markets in a high sector- and stock-specific manner. Adopting such an approach will help mitigate risks in the event of any broad consolidation happening in the markets. While avoiding both shorts and excessive leveraged exposures, a highly selective approach advised over the coming week.

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

Is time ripe for cryptos in your portfolio?



K Naresh Kumar

I've used this space to express my views about crypto currencies and almost all articles happened during the heady days of 2017 when there was euphoria among the investors and traders alike to take a plunge in crypto investments or trading. The Fear Of Missing Out (FOMO) drove the price then to newer records till the reversion to mean happened by the end of the year. I've settled on how it could be used and what should be the approach (personally I've accepted to trade instead of investing) as I couldn't put it either in an income-generating 'asset' or ascribe to a precious commodity as it can't be a raw material for a finished good, etc.

We're at the fag-end of a tumultuous year where almost all have experienced hardships of some kind, primarily due to the pandemic disruption and the subsequent consequences. Now, there seems to be an end of the tunnel with unknown repercussions into the future as some excesses were done to avert some other extreme events, only time would tell that. The crypto

mania is back again though unlike the last time, 'it's different this time', a cliched phrase most used in describing about markets. So, what has changed in the last three years that needs our attention, or does it? The global central banks and governments have upended their own inhibitions to infuse loads of liquidity in a bid to prevent a larger economic collapse. The initial response to a free fall in all assets in the first quarter of this year was by inundating loads of capital to people, enterprises directly and further stimulus by reducing the interest rates while assuring accommodative posture into the near future by the central banks. This has resulted initially in the recovery of prices and then led to a boom in the asset prices irrespective of their risk profiles. As the year ended, the rally in the riskier assets seems to have gone divergent to the actual reality experienced across the global economy. This was one of the primary reasons for the conceptualisation of the crypto as currency in the post-GFC (Great Financial Crisis) world of '08. The revisit of these conditions and with an aggressive stance has turned into a pivot for the rally in the crypto prices. Bitcoin, the pioneer among this, has risen to create record highs but devoid of the euphoria or enigma experienced in the earlier bull rally of '17. The anticipation of the excess liquidity in the system to cause inflation is pushing some of the investors, including the institutions, to seek crypto currency as a hedge, a few



even replacing the otherwise safer heaven yellow metal, Gold.

Another possible big proponent of the current situation is the augmented institutional acceptance and presence in the cryptos. The introduction of derivatives by CME Bitcoin Future market has allowed both sides of the trade to make it more authentic and the demand for regulated exposure through established channels, has played out in its favour. This is further fueled by the interest of the central banks in the slightly modified form of a digital currency. Though, any formulation of central bank backed digital twins could dent the existing players, the very intent of the regulated bodies into this architecture has added fire to the appetite among the investors.

Also, the soft launch of digital currency by the Chinese central bank and incentivising the initial users has evinced further interest among all kinds of investors. Of course, the limited supply and pre-fixed availability of 21mn BTC (unlike the fiat currency) is perceived as the perfect inflation hedge. Interestingly, this time as the rally picked the prices up, there were no rush of the Initial Coin Offerings (ICO) like that of the '17, where the

bubble was reflected in the successful launch of dogecoin (a joke currency and internet meme). Like the extremes of dot com boom guided for the transformation of the internet/technology industry, the '17 boom of cryptos has helped the evolution of this industry.

How much of my perspective towards cryptos has changed? I continue to maintain that if one is not mining (the process of extracting a coin, an economic equivalent of crypto unit) the basic premise of anonymity is lost. So, my constant crib of anyone interested to invest/trade in crypto other than those of mined is that it becomes like any other asset trade thus bringing the tax angle into the equation. But mining has now become expensive especially in the popular crypto options and thus becomes not an ideal proposition to consider.

As the convergence of newer technologies like 5G, quantum computing and AI, blockchain could play its role whether it buffers the excising system or creates an entirely novel architecture needs to be seen. In investing, being flexible, being open to new ideas is a necessary and so my change of heart is an evidence. Certainly, the ecosystem has evolved, consolidated to mature that enhances the experience to have an exposure like those of gold, warming up to this idea is not bad at all.

(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

The gap of strong resistance and support levels has narrowed down to 300 points after the trading hours on Friday (December 18) from a wide range of 2,500 points, while the resistance level remained at the previous 14,000 strike. The support level moved to higher bands as the Put writing became more aggressive. Put writers and Call writers were shifting to higher bands. The options data points to increased activity of both the bears and bulls. The highest Open Interest (OI) was seen at 14,000CE and 13,700PE. Derivatives' analysts forecast the current positive bias should continue as long as the Nifty remains above 13,600 points.

Dhirender Singh Bisht, senior research analyst (derivatives) at

Despite positive bias, options band narrowing down

CALL WRITERS SHIFTING TO HIGHER BANDS

SMC Global Securities Ltd, said: "From derivatives front, Put writers at 13,700 strike supported the Nifty index, while Call writers were shifting to higher bands. This clearly shows a bit of discomfort among bears." The highest concentration of Call OI (33.63 lakh contracts) was at 14,000 strike, followed by 13,800 strike with 22.13 lakh contracts, 14,500 strike with 20.96 lakh contracts and 13,900 strike, which also recorded maximum Call OI addition of 10.01 lakh contracts, with 20.10 lakh contracts. Further, 13,800/ 14,000/14,400/ 14,500 strikes witnessed significant build-up of Call OI.

Coming to Put side, the 13,700 strike, which has maximum Put OI addition of 8.53 lakh contracts, witnessed highest Put OI of 23.45 lakh contracts followed by 13,500

strike with 22.01 lakh contracts, 13,000 strike with 19.98 lakh contracts and 13,400 strike with 15.72 lakh contracts. The reasonable addition of Put OI was seen at 13,500/13,400/13,000 strikes.

From the options space, as per ICICI Direct.com, the immediate option positions are visible at the ATM 13,700 Put strike, which is the highest Put base for the coming weekly settlement. Continued writing among Put strikes has pushed Put-Call ratio (PCR) levels high and it's enhanced the risk of some intermediate profit booking in the market. On the higher side, the highest Call base for the week is at the 14,000 strike.

Bisht further added that "Indian markets continued their winning streak for the seventh consecutive week with Nifty closing above the

13,750-mark, while Bank Nifty also gained marginally higher with closing above the 30,700-mark. IT and pharma counters supported the gains in Nifty, while PSU banks remained under pressure during the week." For the week ended December 18, 2020, BSE Sensex closed at 46,960.69 points, a net gain of 861.68 points or 1.86 per cent, as against 46,099.01 points. Similarly, NSE Nifty, too, moved up by 246.7 points or 1.82 per cent and closed at 13,760.55 points from 13,513.85 points. Bisht forecasts that "from technical front, secondary oscillators suggest that markets are likely to remain volatile in the coming sessions, while bias should remain in favour of bulls as far as Nifty is holding above the 13,500-mark. On the higher side, the 14,000 strike would act as a key psychological

F&O TRADING			
Product	Contracts	Turnover (Rs/cr)	Premium (Rs/cr)
Index Futures	3,43,729	29,781.41	--
Stock Futures	7,75,776	62,808.22	--
Index Options	1,57,60,535	13,71,120.50	8,115.71
Stock Options	15,80,426	1,32,443.58	2,435.58
F&O Total	1,84,60,466	15,96,153.71	10,551.29

Source: NSE/As on Dec 18, 2020

hurdle for Nifty. Any dip into the prices should be used to create fresh longs as bulls are likely to grip the markets." The volatility index, India VIX, remained below 20 level and closed the week near lows. There wouldn't be any major uptick in the volatility index so the current positive bias may continue. "The Implied Volatility of Calls closed at 17.92 per cent, while that for Put options closed at 18.77. The Nifty VIX for the week closed at 19.16 per cent. PCR of OI for the week closed at 1.98 and it indicates

more Put writing than Calls," remarked Bisht. In the F&O space, FIIs remained net buyers, but their activity eased off considerably. FIIs sold worth Rs63 crore in index futures, sold Rs848 cr in the stock futures segment and bought index options worth Rs1,350 crore during the last week.

Bank Nifty

The NSE's banking index Bank Nifty closed at 30,714.65 points, a net rise of 109.8 points or 0.35 per cent from 30,604.85 points. Sec-

turally, the banking index remains crucial for continued move in the Nifty. While technology stocks have seen some reversal and are likely to continue the uptrend, some weakness was seen in the banking index, which is hovering below 31,000 points. A fresh move above these levels may trigger another round of upsides in the banking space. Bank Nifty for the past two weeks was trading in a range where Call writers were dominating and finding it difficult to move above 31,000 points. The stock-specific activity continued where post the QIP news of PNB, the stock fell almost 22 per cent, whereas buying continued in Kotak Mahindra Bank and IndusInd Bank.

As the bulls and bears become active, the options range has also contracted. Due to lower IVs, Put OI additions were seen in 30,500 strike whereas for the second week the highest Call base was at 31,000 strike. Analysts feel more upsides could be seen once the index manages to end above the 31,000 level.



Woman dies in bus stand at Bhadrachalam

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BHADRACHALAM

A woman suffering with TB died in bus stand in Bhadrachalam in the late hours of Saturday.

According to information, Sammaiah, resident of Kothagudem, brought his wife Rama (60), who was suffering from Tuberculosis (TB), to Bhadrachalam for health check-up at Government Area Hospital on Saturday evening. As it was closing time, the hospital staff told Sammaiah to come on Monday to admit her in the hospital.

With this, Sammaiah along with his wife went to bus stand to return to Kothagudem. While they were waiting for the bus, his wife Rama collapsed and died on the spot. Sammaiah shifted the body to their hometown in a private ambulance in the early hours of Sunday.

Youth narrowly escapes from fire accident

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KETHEPALLY (NALGONDA)

BUDGIE Satish, resident of Inupamula village of Kethepally mandal in the district, narrowly escaped from a fire accident while taking a selfie video during his birthday celebrations on Sunday.

According to sources, Satish was holding a fire bar in his hand when his friend sprayed foam spray on his head. Satish's hair caught fire and his friends were alerted and immediately extinguished fire and rescued their friend. This video went viral on social media and Satish friends and others advised the youth not to play with lives.

INTER-DISTRICT CRICKET TOURNEY INAUGURATED

HANS NEWS SERVICE
SURYAPET

DISTRICT Collector T Vinay Krishna Reddy and SP Bhaskaran said that playing sports is a way of life after inaugurating inter-district cricket tournament, organised by Suryapet Cricket Club here on Sunday.

They felt that games and sports will develop friendship among sports persons of villages, districts, States and countries and will help in establishing peace. They advised sportsmen to play tournament in a disciplined manner by following rules and regulations of the game.

Municipal Vice-Chairman Putta Kishore Kumar said that Minister G Jagadish Reddy has



SP Bhaskaran ready to face the bowling by District Collector T Vinay Krishna Reddy after inaugurating inter-district cricket tournament in Suryapet on Sunday

been putting all his efforts to develop sports in the district. Apart from providing incentives to the players, gyms have been set up in several villages in Suryapet constituency following the request of sportsmen and youth of respective villages to the Minister, he added.

Leaders Ramgiri Nagesh, Mudireddy Anil Reddy, K Venu-

gopal Reddy, D Srinivas, E Ramababu Goud, Gone Ashok, Shaik Nasir, Satish, Nukala Srinu, Praven and others participated in the programme.

Prathik Foundation extends financial help to pvt teachers

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NALGONDA

KOMATIREDDY Prathik Foundation distributed study material and general knowledge books to students, who are taking training for police recruitment at a programme organised in the memory of Komatireddy Prathik, at Government Junior College here on Sunday.

Various programmes were organized at Boys College, Charumati Childcare Centre and SPR School here on the ninth death anniversary of Prathik, son of Bhongir MP Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, who died in an accident on December 20, 2011. Lunch was arranged for inmates of Charumati Childcare center in Panagal. Later at a programme, Komatireddy Prathik Foundation CEO MV Gona Reddy distributed financial assistance of Rs 3,000 each to 210 teachers working in private schools. The programme was organized by



Komatireddy Prathik Foundation CEO MV Gona Reddy distributing Rs 3,000 cash to a private teacher at a programme at a private school in Nalgonda on Sunday

Telangana Recognised School Managements Association in association with Prathik Foundation.

Foundation Manager Vamsi, Gummala Mohan Reddy, TRSMA leaders Ravikumar, Rammohan,

N Ram Reddy, Madhusudhan Reddy and others participated in the meeting and thanked Bhongir MP Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, the Foundation chairman, for his philanthropic gesture in helping students, orphans and teachers.

Vanajeevi Ramaiah plants saplings in Bhadradri

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BHADRACHALAM

PADMA Shri awardee Vanajeevi Ramaiah planted saplings in the park here on Sunday. The programme was conducted by Green Bhadradri organisation.

Later speaking with the media, Ramaiah appreciated the Green Bhadradri organisation and JD foundation, which are striving to increase greenery and conducting programmes to make the temple town as plastic-free. He appealed to the people to protect plants and they will protect the people. Green Bhadradri organisation representatives P Desappa, G Bhupathi



Padma Shri awardee Vanajeevi Ramaiah planting saplings at a programme in Bhadradri on Sunday

Rao, Khambhati Suresh, K Krishnarajuna Rao, Umashanker Naidu, Sampath, Tirumal Rao, JD Foundation

convenor Murali Mohan, member K Naga Raju and others participated in the programme.

3 drown in lake

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KHAMMAM

THREE youths, who went for a swim in a lake in Puligundla village of Penuballi mandal in the district, met water grave on Sunday.

According to reports, a group of eight friends went to a lake and five of them ventured into water for swimming. Three of them drowned while two persons reached shore with the help of locals. The deceased were identified as Janga Guna (24), Silam Chalapati (25) and Vemireddy Sai (25), who were natives of Kalluru village.

Villagers alerted the police, who rushed to the spot and deployed expert swimmers to fish out the bodies. A case was registered and investigation was launched.

GWMC wins energy efficiency award

WARANGAL

THE Greater Warangal Municipal Corporation (GWMC) has bagged the prestigious Silver Award in Telangana State Energy Conservation Awards (TSECA) - 2020. On behalf of GWMC, its Mayor Gunda Prakash Rao has received the award from Telangana Transco and Genco CMD D Prabhakar Rao and Secretary PR&RD Sandeep Kumar Sultanania at Marri Channa Reddy Human Resource Development Institute of Telangana during the Energy Conservation Week celebration on Sunday. It may be noted here that the Telangana State Renewable Energy Development Corporation recognises the companies that adopt best energy efficiency initiatives.

Shabbir welcomes proposed revamp of Congress

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

Former Minister Mohammed Ali Shabbir welcomed the proposed changes in the organisation of Congress and hoped that they would help in party's revival at the grass root levels.

Shabbir Ali, in a media

statement on Sunday said that the meeting held by Congress president Sonia Gandhi with senior leaders in New Delhi on Saturday would bring a lot of required changes in the organisation and functioning of Congress party. He said those changes would strengthen the party in Telangana State as it would boost the morale of

Congress cadre at the grass root level. He claimed that Congress was still the largest political party in Telangana with its members having a strong presence in almost every polling booth. However, he said that the cadre was upset and a bit demoralised due to a series of defeats the party suffered since 2014.

"Victory and defeat in elections are a part of electoral politics and the Congress has witnessed several ups and downs in its long history. We've lost a few elections as we didn't compromise on our ideology and approach. We never cheated or misled the people for minor electoral gains. The other parties might have won elec-

tions through unethical and immoral means on the basis of money and muscle power, but the Congress party never indulged in such tactics. Congress believes that electoral politics is the best way to serve people, especially the poor and we will continue to do so irrespective of whether or not we win elections," he said.



Oppn wants middlemen to thrive: BJP

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HANAMKONDA

THE TRS government wants the middlemen to thrive and wants the problems of farmers to be perpetuated, Nizamabad BJP Lok Sabha member Dharmapuri Aravind said. Addressing a press conference here on Sunday, he alleged that beginning with Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao and down to hamalis, everyone has their role in the downfall of farmers. Referring to the new agriculture laws, Aravind wanted to know the adverse effects from KCR. "The BJP-led Central government is ready to



Nizamabad BJP Lok Sabha member Dharmapuri Aravind addressing a press conference in Hanamkonda on Sunday

allay the fears of farmers in regard with the minimum support price (MSP). The Centre has already assured the farmers of resolving the issues faced by the farmers by amending the

laws," Aravind said. The Opposition is raising hue and cry without properly going through the farm laws, he said, stating that KCR is unfit for the Chief Minister post. Both the TRS and

Congress that worked against the interests of the farmers are now blaming the BJP by spreading misinformation about the farm laws, he alleged. He accused KCR of opposing the farm laws that eradicate the middlemen system in the farm purchases. KCR may be of the opinion that he would not get his share from the middlemen if the corporate companies purchase produce from the farmers directly, the Nizamabad MP alleged. The TRS government that leaves farmers to their fate when they suffer crop losses is claiming credit for providing relief to farmers in case of their death, he ridiculed.

Gang of five land in jail for poaching

- Accused from Hyderabad led the hunting expedition for blackbuck
- Forest Task Force raids rice mill in Nizamabad and arrests the accused

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD/NIZAMABAD

THE Telangana State Forest Department (TSFD) vigilance and anti-poaching officials conducted raids in Jokora village near Varni in Nizamabad district and arrested a gang on the charges of poaching wild animals.

The TSFD said on Sunday, a team of officials from the vigilance and anti-poaching wing have received credible information of a group of persons staying in the area to hunt wild animals.

Based on the information, the officials raided a rice mill in the area and intercepted a poaching gang headed by a person named Luqman Affendi.

During the preliminary investigations, the main accused Affendi confessed that he had gone for hunting to



the nearby forest areas and farmlands and hunted the Hare which he came across.

The TSFD officials said that a team of officials simultaneously conducted a raid on the Affendi's house at Gudimalkapur, Mehadiapatnam in Hyderabad and found deep frozen meat packed in plastic bags. They also found two rifle butts. "These articles are taken into custody and the meat samples will be sent to CCMB Hyderabad for identification of the animal," they said.

The TSFD further informed that

Laqman Affendi was a habitual hunter. Tata Safari vehicle that was used in hunting (AP 29 AN 0001), was seized along with the rifles and other equipment used in hunting along with the hunted Hare from the accused.

A detailed investigation into the case is on and the five offenders involved in the hunt have been arrested.

The TSFD said people can send information on Wildlife poaching cases of this nature can be passed on to the Forest Department on 24/7 Tollfree helpline 18004255364 for immediate response.

Call to protect human rights

HANS NEWS SERVICE
WARANGAL

HUMAN rights are like armour, hence they need to be protected earnestly, State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) chairman Justice G Chandraiah said. The chairman along with other members - Nadipally Ananda Rao and Md Irfan Moinuddin - inspected several wards in the MGM Hospital on Sunday and spoke with the duty doctors and officials.

Justice Chandraiah enquired about the basic amenities being provided in the hospital. Later, he elicited information about the healthcare facilities and Covid-19 tests etc. He stressed the importance of doctors on duty 24x7 and ensuring infrastructure in the hospital. The Chairman interacted with the patients and took their feedback on amenities and healthcare facilities.

Conducting a review meeting with the officials, he di-



SHRC chairman Justice G Chandraiah along with other members - Nadipally Ananda Rao and Md Irfan Moinuddin - interacting with patients in the MGM Hospital in Warangal on Sunday

rected the Revenue officials to sensitise the people about the importance of pattadar passbooks. He said that onus is on officials to ensure proper distribution of essentials. Responding to the chairman's query about the issues faced by the farmers such as Rythu Bima etc, the RDO Vasu Chandra said that there were no problems.

Turning focus on education,

Justice Chandraiah told the officials to ensure online classes to all the students, especially those living in remote areas of the district. The responsibility is on Revenue and Panchayat staff to visit villages and enquire about online education.

Sectoral officer in the education department Manoj Kumar told the Commission that 90 per cent of the students were attending the online

classes. Commissioner of Police P Pramod Kumar informed the Commission members that his department was trying its best to provide relief to the complainants. "With majority of people acquiring knowledge about human rights, the crime rate has also come down in the region," Pramod said. Later, the DM&HO Dr K Lalitha explained about the measures being taken by them to provide best healthcare to the people.

Greater Warangal Municipal Corporation (GWMC) Secretary Vijayalakshmi informed the Commission that due to the staff crunch the city was facing sanitation problems.

A Task Force committee has been constituted with the Urban District Collector Rajeev Gandhi Hanumanth as its head to look into the issues that cropped up after the floods in Warangal in mid-August. Vijayalakshmi responded to a query. Later, Justice Chandraiah and others inspected Warangal Central Prison.

Covid recovery rate crosses 97% in TS

- Three more persons succumb to virus, pushing the toll to 1,513
- Over 90% of beds in govt, pvt hospitals remain vacant in State

HYDERABAD

TELANGANA'S Covid-19 recovery rate has crossed 97 per cent with 643 people recovering from the virus as on Sunday. The state continues to see more recoveries than daily count of new infections. With the latest recoveries, the cumulative num-



ber rose to 2,73,013. The State's recovery rate of 97.01 per cent is higher than the national average of 95.5 per cent. The State reported 592 new positive cases during the 24 hours between Saturday and Sunday, taking the tally to 2,81,414. Three more persons succumbed to the virus during the same pe-

riod, pushing the toll to 1,513. The state's Covid fatality rate remains at 0.53 per cent against the national average of 1.5 per cent.

According to the director of public health and family welfare, 44.96 per cent of the deaths were due to Covid while the remaining 55.04 per cent were on account of comorbidities. The state now has 6,888 active cases and of them 4,719 are in home or institutional isolation. Over 90 per cent of beds in government-run and private hospitals treating Covid-19 in the state remain vacant.

Out of 8,561 beds available in 61 government hospitals treating Covid, 7,793 beds are vacant. A total of 768 people

are undergoing treatment in these hospitals. Similarly, in 219 private hospitals treating Covid patients, only 1,401 beds out of 7,920 are occupied. Of the new cases reported between Saturday and Sunday, Greater Hyderabad accounted for 119. The daily count in districts remained in single or double digits. Medchal Malkajgiri district saw the second highest number of new cases at 70 followed by Rangareddy (57), Warangal Urban (40), Karimnagar (26) and Sangareddy (20). Of the 41,970 tests conducted, government-run laboratories accounted for 38,250 while remaining 3,720 samples were tested in private labs.

Vignesh wonder goal helps Mumbai end Hyd's unbeaten run

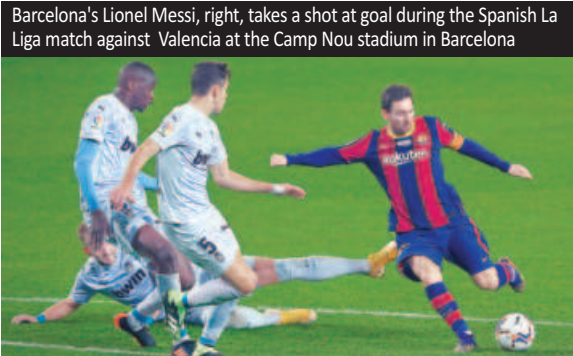
VASCO (GOA)



A wonder-goal from Vignesh Dakshinamurthy was the highlight of the evening as Mumbai City FC beat Hyderabad FC 2-0 in the Indian Super League (ISL) at the Tilak Maidan on Sunday.

In a match that saw both sides struggle to create clear-cut chances, Vignesh's acrobatic 38th-minute strike stood out as a genuine moment of quality. Adam Le Fondre put Sergio Lobera's men further ahead in the 59th minute as Hyderabad tasted their first defeat of the season.

The eagerness that marked much of the game was evident from the fact that Vignesh's goal was the only shot on target in the first half. With Hugo Boumous missing yet again, Mumbai's creative struggles that plagued them in their last match against Jamshedpur, continued here as well. They had the better of Hyderabad in every parameter in the first half - they dominated possession, peppered the opposition box with crosses and com-



I admire you very much: Pele congratulates Messi

NEW DELHI

LEGENDARY footballer Pele has paid a rich tribute to Lionel Messi after the Barcelona forward equalled the Brazilian legend's record of being the highest goalscorer ever for a single club.

Messi equalled Pele's tally of 643 goals for Santos with a header at the stroke of halftime in Barcelona's 2-2 home draw with Valencia in LaLiga on Saturday evening.

"When your heart overflows with love, it is difficult to change your path. Like you, I know what it's like to love wearing the same shirt every day. Like you, I know that there is nothing better than the place we feel at home," Pele said in an Instagram post.

"Congratulations on your historic record, Lionel. But above all, congratulations on your beautiful career at Barcelona. Stories like ours, of loving the same club for so long, unfortunately, will be increasingly rare in football. I admire you very much."

While Messi achieved the feat across 17 seasons in 748 games, Pele needed only 665 games to reach the figure.

Pele, the only player to have won the World Cup three times, holds the Guinness world record for most goals in a career with 1,283, including friendlies.

The 80-year-old, who played his last game for Santos in 1974, is one of the greatest players ever to grace the game. He is Brazil's all-time highest scorer with 77 goals in 92 international matches from 1957 to 1971. And there's another Pele record that Messi has in his sights. The 77 goals that the Brazilian scored for his country are still a South American record. But the 33-year-old Messi has 71 for Argentina, and needs just six more to equal that number. (IANS)

Southee, Seifert star as NZ beat Pak to clinch T20I series

HAMILTON

RIGHT-arm pacer Tim Southee's brilliant bowling followed by half centuries from wicketkeeper-batsman Tim Seifert and captain Kane Williamson helped New Zealand secure a comfortable nine-wicket win over Pakistan in the second T20I at the Seddon Park on Sunday.

Chasing 164, the Black Caps rode on a brilliant 84 not out from Seifert and unbeaten 57 from Williamson to comfortably chase down the target with four balls to spare.

Earlier, opting to bat, Pakistan once started poorly as they lost Haider Ali (8), Abdullah Shafique (0) and Mohammad Rizwan (22) within the first six overs with just 33 runs on the board.

Veteran all-rounder Mohammad Hafeez then tried to steady the ship. However, wickets kept falling at other end. In the end, Hafeez remained not out on 99. During the course of his 57-ball knock, the 40-year-old smashed 10 fours and 5 sixes and helped the visitors post 163/6 -- a below par-total -- in their allotted 20 overs.

Southee was pick of the New Zealand bowlers as he returned with figures of 4/21 in his four overs.

The hosts, then made easy work of the chase as they just lost the lone wicket of opener Martin Gupthill who scored 21 runs from 11 balls, with the help of two 6s and a four before getting out by Faheem Ashraf before getting over the line in the final over of the match. (IANS)

Brief scores: Pakistan 163/6 (Mohammad Hafeez 99*; Tim Southee 4/21) lose to New Zealand 164/1 (Tim Seifert 84*; Faheem Ashraf 1/19)

pleted a many more passes. But for the longest time, it looked like a goal would not come.

Whatever questions Mumbai posed, the Hyderabad defence had the answer. Vignesh's cross in the very first minute of the game was duly dealt with. At the other end of the pitch, Aridane Santana created an opening for Mohammed Yasir, but his cut-back was intercepted by the Mumbai defence.

For Mumbai, Bipin Singh was a lively figure in attack. The winger, in the 15th minute, whipped in a cross that was headed back into danger by Rowlin Borges at the far post, only for the Goan to be flagged offside. Bipin was again in the thick of things in the 26th minute, when he unleashed an attempt from down the right, after being fed by Ahmed Jahouh, only to find the side netting.

But just when it looked like a goal was unlikely, it came in the most spectacular of fashions. A freekick from Jahouh was met with the deftest of

touches by Bipin, that diverted it into the path of the onrushing Vignesh.

The youngster did not wait for the ball to hit the ground and volleyed it into the net for what is surely one of the best goals of the season so far.

Immediately after the goal, Hyderabad had a chance to equalise when

Match Result	
Hyderabad FC lose to Mumbai City FC	0-2
Kerala Blasters FC draw with SC East Bengal	1-1

Akash Mishra's cross found Yasir in the box. He had a free sight on goal, but somehow managed to divert his header side.

Mumbai did not wait long after the second half started to increase their lead. Le Fondre took a touch after receiving a pass from Borges and slotted it past Subrata Paul.

Hyderabad looked livelier than they did in the first half, especially with the introduction of Liston Colaco, but their inability to create clear-cut chances meant that they failed to trouble the Mumbai defence. (IANS)

TODAY'S MATCH ATK Mohun Bagan vs Bengaluru FC at Fatorda Stadium 7.30pm

Kohli closes gap on Smith at top of ICC Test rankings

ADELAIDE

INDIA skipper Virat Kohli has managed to fractionally close the gap on Steve Smith at the top of the ICC Test Player Rankings from 25 points to 13 points while after the culmination of the first Test of the ongoing Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

Kohli's innings of 74 & 4 in the Adelaide Test, which India lost by eight wickets, has enabled him to gain two points, whereas Smith's 1 & 1* lost him 10 points in the table.

Marnus Labuschagne's innings of 47 & 6 in a low-scoring match have pushed him to a career-best 839 points. Whereas, captain Tim Paine's player-of-the-match innings of 73 not out has lifted him with a career-best of 33rd place with 592 points. His previous best was 45th in December of 2018.



Further down, Joe Burns unbeaten 51 saw him move into 48th place, the first time he has been in the top 50 since 2016.

With the ball, Pat Cummins took seven wickets in the match to gain six points and move from 904 to 910, which is a comfortable lead over Stuart Broad in second place.

Josh Hazlewood's astonishing figures of 5/8 in India's second innings helped him gain four spots and move back into the top five with 805 points, the first time since March 2018.

With four wickets in Australia's first innings, India's off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin has overtaken Jasprit Bumrah as India's top ranked bowler, currently in the ninth place.

The two teams will now face each other in the second Test beginning December 26 at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. (IANS)

When FIFA chief termed India 'best technical side of Asia'

NEW DELHI

FACING the Japanese side who came to Bangkok at the back of winning the bronze medal at the 1968 Summer Olympics in Mexico City -- the first-ever Asian country to win an Olympic medal in football -- was a herculean task for the Indian football team at the sixth Asian Games in 1970.

But the 20-men India contingent had something else in their mind. Right from goalkeeper Sampath to forward Amar Bahadur, everyone played the game of their lives to earn the title of "best technical side of Asia" from none other than the-then FIFA President Sir Stanley Rous, as recalled by Subhash Bhowmick, and Shyam Thapa. India rode on an Bahadur strike to beat Japan by a solitary goal to garner the bronze.

"Everyone was expecting to see an India-Japan final. But we faced the bronze-medal-decider. Sampath, Sudhir (Karmakar) everyone played like they were playing for their lives. FIFA President complimented us as the best technical team of Asia. Moreover, he praised Sudhir as the best defender in Asia," Bhowmick remembered as per the-aiff.com.

Why shouldn't he? Japan boasted of two of the best Asian forwards at that time -- Kunishige Kamamoto and Teruki Miyamoto who had played a pivotal role in their historic Olympic bronze medal-winning-campaign in Mexico City two years back. Kamamoto scored seven goals in six



games to finish at the top of the table. Not only that, he was hailed by none other than Pele as one of the best 40 footballers -- the sole Asian footballer to attain the feat.

A NERVOUS START

The sixth Asian Games was earlier scheduled in Islamabad. Nine months before the show, it had to be shifted to Bangkok as they had hosted the prior edition.

The Indian team, under the coaching of Gulam Mohammed Basha and Pradeep Kumar Banerjee, had a shaky start to the campaign. In the opening game against hosts Thailand on December 10, they conceded two goals within the first 17 minutes in front of a 50,000-odd hostile crowd who were cheering in sup-

port of the War Elephants.

Skipper Syed Nyemuddin and his boys had to go all-out in search of an opening goal and they did so. "Before the break, I scored one. We knew if we could score another one quickly, Thailand would be shocked. Soon after the second half started, I scored the equaliser," Bhowmick's said.

"I could have scored a hat-trick that day. Habib put in a delicious cross soon after the equaliser but I tried something tricky and missed the sitter. I don't have anyone but myself to blame for that. I still rue that chance," he added.

A rejuvenated India team overpowered South Vietnam on the

next day, thanks to one strike apiece from Md. Habib and Magan Singh to advance to the quarterfinals where they were clubbed with heavyweights Japan and Indonesia.

TAXING SCHEDULE

"The schedule was very taxing as we had to play six matches in nine days. By then, our bodies started to give up. Japan beat us in our next match. They were a side who could run at the same pace throughout the 90 minutes -- a supremely fit side," Thapa said.

The loss against Japan didn't affect their enviable run too much as they already qualified to the semi-finals. After the gold medal-

COLOGNE BOXING WORLD CUP



NEW DELHI

INDIAN boxers won three gold medals, besides two silver and four bronze, at the recently concluded Cologne Boxing World Cup held in Koln, Germany.

Ace Indian pugilists Amit Panghal (flyweight 52kg), Manisha Moun (57 kg) and Olympic qualifier Simranjit Kaur Baath (60kg) clinched gold medals in their respective weight categories.

Sakshi Choudhary (57 kg), two-time AIBA Women's Youth World Champion and heavy weight boxer Satish Kumar (+91kg) won the silver medals.

Sonia Lather (57kg), Pooja Rani (75kg) Gaurav Solanki (57kg) and Mohamed Hussamudin (57kg) bagged bronze medals.

"Our Indian boys and girls have won nine medals including three gold, two silver and four bronze medals at the prestigious Cologne Boxing World Cup," Union Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju shared the news on his official Twitter handle on Sunday.

"India has achieved tremendous progress in

Punjab's Kaur bags gold as India wrap up with nine medals; Rijiju lauds performance

boxing. My hearty congratulations to our star boxers!" he added.

Punjab State Sports and Youth Affairs Minister Rana Gurmit Singh Sodhi congratulated the 25-year-old pugilist, hailing from Punjab, for showing swift footwork to beat the German opponent hands down with clear punches in the final.

Sodhi said India's AIBA Women's World Boxing Championships bronze medalist Simranjit Kaur also put up an impressive show in the semi-finals and competed against Maya Kleinhans in the title bout and won by a split decision taking the gold medal in the 60 kg category.

The minister said the state has already announced to bear the entire cost of Olympic preparations of the maiden women boxer of the state.

"This was an extraordinary achievement of the daughter of an ordinary family and every possible help would be provided from the state government to help her career move forward," Sodhi added.

Kaur was the first Punjabi woman boxer to qualify for the Olympic Games. She bagged a silver medal in the Asia-Oceania Qualifiers. (IANS)

No change in schedule, SCG remains our choice for 3rd Test, says CA

ADELAIDE

CRICKET Australia on Sunday stated that the third Test of the ongoing four-match series between Australia and India remains on track to be played in Sydney for now despite a fresh Covid-19 cluster in the city.

The third Test is scheduled to be played at the Sydney Cricket Ground from January 7-11.

However, a report in The Sydney Morning Herald stated that CA is mulling over the idea of taking the third Test to Brisbane and switching the fourth match to Sydney.

"The third Vodafone Test is more than two-and-a-half weeks away, which provides us with time to assess the evolving public health situation on the northern beaches of Sydney," said CA interim CEO Nick Hockley.

"We have made no changes to our schedule and our preference remains to play the match at the Sydney Cricket Ground," he added.

Hockley further pointed out that Cricket Australia has developed a solid track record of delivery throughout "this most challenging of summers" and would continue to make appropriate and proportionate decisions in consultation with our

Shami likely to miss rest of Tests

ADELAIDE



RIGHT-arm India fast bowler Mohammed Shami is likely to miss the remaining three Tests of the ongoing four-match series against Australia after scans on his bowling hand revealed hairline fracture, it has been learnt.

Shami was hit on the right hand just above the wrist on Saturday by a delivery from Australia pacer Pat Cummins as the India No. 11 tried to take evasive action. He could not pick the bat due to severe pain and had to retire hurt as India's second innings folded for 36. A source confirmed, "It looks like he (Shami) will not play the series."

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is, however, yet to issue a statement on this.

India suffered an embarrassing eight-wicket loss on the third day of the pink-ball Test at the Adelaide Oval.

After the match, skipper Virat Kohli had said that Shami was in a lot of pain and was taken to a hospital for scans.

"No news on Shami, he's going for a scan now. He was in a lot of pain and couldn't even lift his arm. We'll probably know in the evening what happens," Kohli had said at the post-match presentation ceremony.

If Shami is ruled out of the series, it would deepen India's fast bowling crisis as Ishant Sharma is already out due to injury. The two teams will meet again in the second Test beginning December 26 at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG), where Team India will be without the services of Kohli and in his absence, Ajinkya Rahane will lead the side. (IANS)

biosecurity team, governments, state & territory associations, the Australian Cricketers' Association, our partners and venues.

"CA has prepared for the possibility of Covid-19 hotspots and state border closures over the

course of the summer and the protocols that we have put in place have been effective in ensuring the safety and success of the men's and women's domestic and international programs to date," the CA chief executive said. (IANS)

winning campaign in 1962, another Asian Games medal was in sight.

Burma, which was renamed as Myanmar later, was one of the top Asian football playing countries at that time. The South Asian country were clear favourites against India.

"We couldn't play to our strength against Burma. Even we didn't have luck on our side. Magan's header came off the post and my volley hit the crossbar. Our aspiration of winning the Asian Games gold medal ended abruptly," Bhowmick shared.

In a process to redeem themselves, India had to come up with something extraordinary and someone had to emerge as a hero. But, little did anyone imagine that Sudhir Karmakar, a defender with no physical presence, would rise like a phoenix.

"Prasad was our regular central defender but on match-day, he felt a pain on his right foot. Pradeep-da and Basha-sir weren't ready to take any chance and asked me to fill the void. I was in a dilemma without much choice," Karmakar said.

"We knew the demeanour of Kamamoto and what sort of damage he could do to any opponent. As the game continued, I stuck to him like a shadow and tried to intercept the aerial deliveries directed to him. Towards the end of the game, he took a desperate header but Sampath came up with a blinder to deny him. We won the bronze medal," he added. (IANS)