

Womenia

TWEET PATROL

**RAKUL SINGH @RAKULPREET**

Arjun and I will raise the temperature more than the summer this time with our first ever song together. Revealing tomorrow! Stay tuned!!

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APOORVA in a detective series

Apoorva Arora, who is seen in various Bollywood movies like OMG: Oh My God and Holiday, will now be seen in a web series called 'DUDE'. Apoorva speaks to The Hans India about the web series

ASKARI JAFFER

DUDE is a web series on Alright YouTube channel produced by Rusk Media. They follow a detective, DUDE, who works at a private detective firm in R.K. Puram. He is assigned a case in the beginning of our story.

A young married couple gets an anonymous threat letter that their child will be kidnapped if they don't let go of their recently locked deal for a house in Delhi. Now it looks like an open and shut case with DUDE having enough proof that the mother of the kid is faking the entire threat scenario. Now, also DUDE has decided to quit his profession once this case is done. We aren't aware other exact reasons but we keep getting a sense of what it is about. So, the dude's mother

went Missing when he was 11. DUDE has been directed together by Ambrish Verma and Nilesh Jadhav. The web series casts Apoorva Arora, Arun Kushwaha and Shibani Bedi.

Sharing about what inspired Apoorva to be a part of this, she shares, "The fact that I'll be

working with a bunch of friends and familiar faces, got me really excited about the show. Also, for me this was an experiment in itself because playing a character like Ritu, that needs to be underplayed even in a super charged environment was a challenge. I chose to do this role because playing a detective sounds a lot of fun and being a part of a dream project where everyone's giving more than their 100% is even more exciting. Ritu is a smart woman who doesn't let her emotions get the best of her and that makes her good at what she does and a little complicated at personal relationships. She further thanks the audience for getting involved with the show and all its characters from the word go and accepting stories that are out of the box and new to



Dot art: Connecting peace through dots

Dot art is a style of aboriginal art that makes extensive use of dots of colour. It is a practice of applying small strokes or dots of color to a surface so that from a distance they visually blend together.

TEJAL SINHA

YOU would have heard or tried various forms of art like portraits, sketching, knife paintings and many more. But have you ever tried 'Dot art'?

Dot art is basically a mandala technique for abstract art which also helps you to relax and enjoy the art like that of the other types of arts. However, something that makes this type of art different from the rest is that Dot art involves the use various colors which are filled using dots.

In this form of art, the artists blend the dots with the mandala art making it much more colorful and attractive. Dot art is a very meditative artform that was originated in aboriginal Australia. The blending of Mandala and dot art brings about a soothing, almost therapeutic painting that is traditional in its approach and yet adds a contemporary touch to any modern home. It requires a lot of patience and attention to detail. Though the art form was first introduced in Australia, many women across the nation found their peace of mind through this art.

Sonal Shah, a 52-year-old based in Mumbai shares that she has been creating the dot art paintings for the past two years.

She adds, "Despite having no formal training, I could easily equip myself with knowledge from the internet. It took a lot of experimentation to find my niche. Since then, I have also blended Gond, another ancient tribal artform of India with dot art. Back when my daughter was in New York for her studies, I wanted to gift her something and that's how the idea was born. In a short span of two years, I have gone from painting on 1.5cm to a 3x3feet canvas." Agrima Asthana, a 23 year old Hyderabad, who is also a home baker and always had her hands on various arts shares that she started doing the art at a very young age.

"I started doing Dot art when I was 15. I didn't understand it back then I was so young but after prac-



Difficulties associated with Dot art

BREATHWORK

It is very important to have the correct breathing rhythm while dotting to ensure the consistency in each and every drop of the paint.

GEOMETRY

"It took me a lot of trial and error to realise the importance of guidelines. Once the plan of action is set, one can always improvise. But regardless, it is always important to go in with a plan when you are practicing an art form as structural as Mandala and dot art," shares Sonal.

ting of years and now at 23, it is my favourite thing to do to decorate any old surface with Dot art or a mix of mandala and Dot art. My Love for abstract art and it may seem easy when you see someone do Dot art but when you actually do it, you need a lot of time and patience," shares Agrima. While there were people who did this art out of their passion, the pandemic

PATIENCE

You should know when to stop when you are not in a mood to do it, because there is no reason to force art.

"I had difficulties with making mixed shaped dots so I went for my cake ball tools for fondant in Dot art to make perfect shaped Dot art. In those tools, we have all sizes of circles and it takes up great amount of colour to create the depth in the painting," adds Agrima.

also led to an opportunity to put their hands on this art. One amongst them is this 30-year-old Indore based mom of two, Sneha Somani. She shares, "I started doing the dot art, a year ago during the lockdown. According to me Dot art is a meditation and one will go on deeper n deeper once stepped in the ocean of dot art. This relaxes the mind and soul. I think my baby Shanaya did inspire me to start doing the art. It just happened unknowingly."

A tale of power, betrayal

SIDDIHI JAIN

AWARD-WINNING historical novelist Devika Rangachari is bringing forth the feminist tale of legendary warrior queen, Rani Lakshmi Bai in her new book 'Queen of Fire' which is set to launch on Monday.

Rangachari brings to vivid life the interior life of this nineteenth century queen, thrust into a position she does not desire but must assume, and of her son, who is cowed by the challenges he has to face but determined to live up to his mother's boldness and courage.

The book's synopsis says, "Lakshmi Bai the widowed queen of Jhansi, is determined to protect her son's right to his father's throne, and the welfare of the kingdom she is ruling."



Devika Rangachari

'Queen of Fire'

Faced with the British machinations to take over her kingdom, at a time when all of India is aflame with the fire of the first War of Independence, she has to prove her valour and sagacity again and again, but will this be enough to save all that she values?

This 124-hour gripping tale of power and betrayal captures the

queen's bold quest to fight injustices and save her land.

R a n - gachari's book, 'Queen of Ice' (Duckbill), was on the White Raven list, which won the Neev Young Adult Book Award, and was shortlisted for the Sahitya Akademi's Bal

Sahitya Puraskar; it has been optioned to be made into a movie or television series.

She is currently the recipient of a prestigious national fellowship awarded by the ministry of culture in India to research aspects of gender and historical fiction in Indian children's literature.

The book is published by Penguin books.

LIBRARY WORKER's DAY

Librarians can be a vital help for all of the visitors to the library who need to do research or check out books. For those who enjoy education and learning new things, then a librarian can be like a very best friend!

Because of their ability to maintain and accumulate information, organize it and then share it with others, librarians deserve a huge amount of appreciation and respect. Most librarians spend a great deal of time in college, often spending four years for a bachelor of science degree and then two more years for a master's degree in library science. Even though they are so highly educated, not many people realize how important the work of a librarian truly is. Not only do they help maintain history that has been kept for hundreds of years, they also play a critical role in educating today's youth as they are preparing for the future. Library Workers Day aims to show appreciation for the work that librarians (and all library employees) do for the people in their communities. The day is also an important one in advocating for better pay wages for librarians and



library staff everywhere.

On Library Workers Day, librarians often take the time to teach children and students the importance of their job, the history of librarians, and how libraries have been vital in shaping human history.

Now, on this important day, visitors who recognize the privilege it is to have public libraries are encouraged to go

out of their way to thank their librarians for their services in educating the adults and children in their communities!

Getting involved in celebrating Library Workers Day can be great fun and is for a great cause! Try these ideas to celebrate:

Volunteer at the library

Libraries are notoriously underfunded, and that often

means they are understaffed. As a vital part of the community that brings in very little revenue of its own, libraries count on local volunteers to help them keep everything running smoothly. Volunteer workers at the library might do tasks such as helping with community events and special projects. They act as representatives of the library and interact as people.

Advocate for librarians and library staff

Library Workers Day aims to show appreciation for the expertise, hard work and dedication of librarians everywhere, while also advocating for better pay wages. It's a time to be thankful for everything related to libraries and books, especially the library workers!

Make an impact on the world and celebrate Library Workers Day by heading over to local government offices to petition for better pay and benefits for librarians in the community. Take time to create flyers about the day and post them at a community center or on other bulletin boards to celebrate. Encourage friends and family members to also join in on advocating for equal pay that will help to support their local librarians.

Read a book!

Library workers are all about the books—so the best way to honor them is to pick up one and read! Take the time to read some books and enjoy what the libraries have to offer, including these genres of fiction:



Action and Adventure

For those who love to be on the edge of their seats, this is the perfect kind of book to read. Get involved in risky, dangerous situations without even leaving your chair!

■ Classics. Sometimes stories that were groundbreaking when they were published have even more to say decades later than they did originally.

■ Mystery and Detective Novels. Featuring the solving of crimes, this genre often includes an investigator who is dedicated to solving a mystery.

■ Fantasy. Typically set in an imaginary world, this type of book allows a complete escape from reality where characters often have magical powers and even animals can come to life.

NEWS ROUNDUP

Shreya Ghoshal shares surprise baby shower pictures

Singer Shreya Ghoshal took to Instagram, on Sunday, to post a series of pictures from her virtual baby shower.

The singer is glowing in the pictures and sports a 'Mom To Be' sash. She is holding a 'Mommy to be' card as well. In front of her, Shreya has a plate and bowls full of food, cooked by her friends.

She captioned the pictures as, "When friends decide to pamper you even from a distance????? Online surprise baby shower from my cutest 'Baawris'???? Everyone cooked something, or made something handmade, sent in a platter, plenty fun and games???.. How lucky am I!?? Wish the times were different and no lockdown/curfew were here. Missing meeting my girls. @moitrasarada @sharivanaik @kaushiki_sings @saiyami @rush2mee #IndraniDi #RakhiDi Backstage and tech management: @moitrasantanu @shiladitya ??"

Shreya, who is expecting her first baby with husband Shiladitya Mukhopadhyaya, had shared the news of her pregnancy with her fans on social media last month.



Sonu Sood is Punjab’s brand ambassador for vaccination

CHANDIGARH

SONU SOOD, the Messiah of the migrants who refuses to call himself so, has donned a new hat. Beginning Sunday, he is the brand ambassador of the Punjab government for its Covid vaccination programme.

Chief Minister Amarinder Singh made the announcement a day after meeting Sonu Sood, who called on him at his residence.

"There is no one more ideally suited to inspire and influence people to take the vaccine. There is a lot of hesitancy among people here in Punjab. Sonu's popularity among them, and his exemplary role in helping tens of thousands of migrants reach safely home since the pandemic broke out last year, will help counter their

reservations," said the Chief Minister.

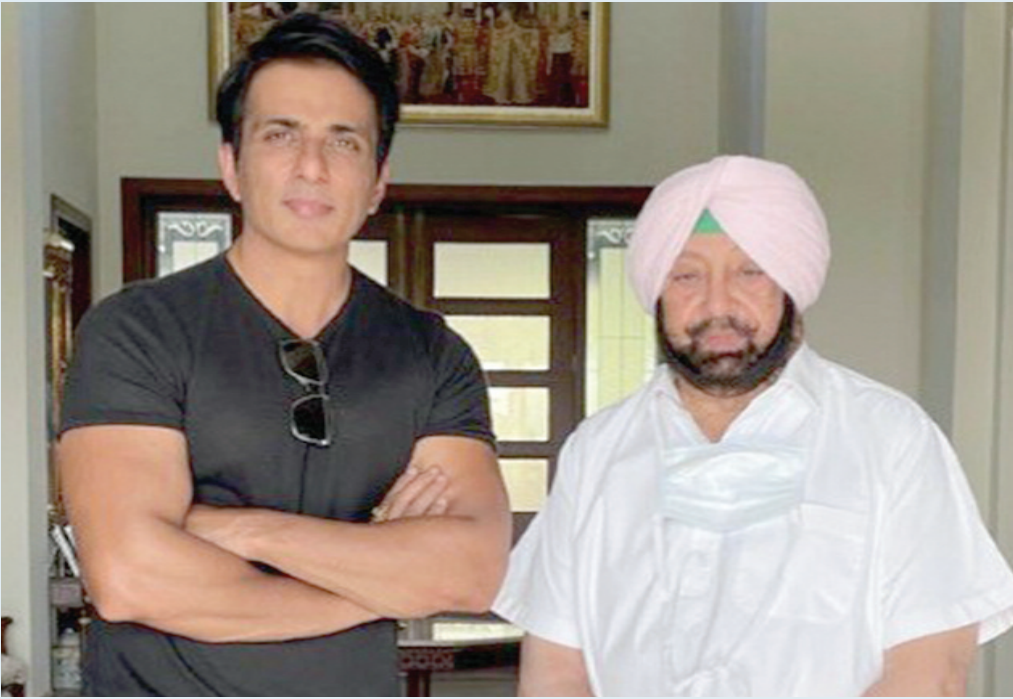
"When people hear this Punjab 'da puttar' talk about the benefits of vaccine, and how safe and essential it is, they will believe him. Because they trust him," he added.

Sonu said he was happy and honoured to be appointed the brand ambassador for this life-saving product.

"I feel blessed to be playing any part in this huge campaign of the Punjab government to protect the lives of the people of my home state," he added.

On the occasion, Sonu presented to the Chief Minister his book 'I am no Messiah', which he says captures his the experiences of his journey from Punjab's Moga town to Mumbai.

"I truly believe I am no saviour. I am just a human being playing my own small part in the



big plans of God. If I can, in the process, touch any lives in any manner, I can only say - God has blessed me, he is guiding me to fulfill my duty.

Meanwhile, amid rising coronavirus cases in the national capital, the Delhi administration has come up with a unique idea to encourage all those eligible, to register for the Covid-19 vaccine.

Coming up with an incentive-based scheme, North Delhi Mayor Jai Prakash on Saturday said, that owners (or any of their family members) of residential properties who have received the Covid-19 jab can apply for additional rebate in payment of property tax.

This announcement comes in the backdrop of the 'Tika Utsav' or vaccine festival being conducted all across the country from April 11-14. The initiative

aims to vaccinate maximum eligible people against the virus.

The mayor said a circular was issued on Friday in anticipation of approval of the North Delhi Municipal Corporation.

"According to the circular, owners or taxpayers of residential properties only, will have special incentive of getting a further rebate of 5 per cent in payment of property tax, over and above the 15 per cent rebate enjoyed on timely payment of the annual tax if they are eligible for vaccination and vaccinated, and so are their eligible family members," he said.

Such owners will have to furnish copies of vaccination certificates of all members to avail the scheme, which is applicable with immediate effect, the circular stated.

It is available only till June 30, the mayor said.

5 rescued from blaze at house in south Delhi

NEW DELHI

FIVE people were rescued from a house fire in south Delhi's Greater Kailash locality early on Sunday, the Delhi Fire Services (DFS) said. A DFS official said information regarding the blaze was received at 4.18 am and four fire tenders were rushed to the spot. The fire originated on the first floor of the building in Greater Kailash and trapped those living above.

The smoke engulfed the second floor of the building, the official said. The fire was brought under control around 5 am, following which the rescue operation was started. Five people were rescued safely from the second floor and they have been identified as Shivani (27), Bharat (35), Naveet (31), C R Ram (60) and Romil (57), a senior fire official said.

Police said one Ram Kumar Singh informed them at 4.21 am regarding the fire. The cause of the fire was a short circuit in the air conditioner's stabilizer. All five



people were rescued on time. In a separate incident, a major fire broke out at Shastri Park area of the national capital late on Saturday night, the official said. The DFS received information about

the blaze at a furniture market in Vijay Court near Shastri Park Metro Station at 12.45 am, they said. A total of 27 fire tenders were rushed to the spot, the official said, adding that around 200 fur-

niture shops were gutted in the incident.

The fire was brought under control around 3 am and no injuries were reported in the incident, they added.

Yogi to provide employment to youth through fish farming

LUCKNOW

THE Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh is planning to provide employment opportunities to the youth in fish farming.

The State government sees considerable employment potential in this sector and believes that it can play an important role in rural development and the economy.

This easy-to-start business can be started with low capital.

According to the government spokesman, the chief minister plans to launch many beneficial schemes through the Department of Fisheries, which will not only promote fisheries business but will also provide jobs to the needy that will help them become self-reliant once again.

This will also help in increasing the income of the village panchayat from the ponds built on the barren Panchayati land in the village.

"Along with imparting training on fisheries, efforts are being made by the government to expand this business on a larger scale. Now farmers can increase their income by farming as well



as fisheries," the spokesman said.

It may be recalled that the state government has already increased the duration of fishery reservoirs from 3 years to 10 years. This is the reason that the state has produced 26.44 lakh MT of fish during the last four years.

As many as 1,191.27 crore fishery seeds were produced in four years and 5,902 fish farmers were provided Kisan Credit Cards.

The state government has also provided the benefit of free fishermen accident insurance scheme to the farmers by implementing the 'Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana' under

the Atmanirbhar campaign.

The State government has also allotted 2,215 fishermen, houses in the state in the last four years.

Along with this, the facilities for fishermen of Uttar Pradesh are now available through the fish farmer app.

Farmers are directly being benefitted from the construction of 57 fish seed hatcheries and 385 fish seed rearing units in the state.

Recently, Uttar Pradesh has also received the first prize of the best state of inland fisheries under the leadership of the chief minister Yogi Adityanath.

UP man booked for forcing conversion, 2 years after marriage

ALIGARH

TWO years after marriage, a woman has accused her husband and his two sisters of 'forcibly converting' her.

The woman said, she never realized that her husband was a Muslim and had never met her in-laws. She had retained her maiden name after marriage.

The Muslim man, 25, and his sisters have now been booked under the anti-conversion law.

According to reports, the woman, Puja Soni, 23, is from Chhattisgarh. She said she had married a man named Ashok Rajput in March 2019 in Delhi, where she works at a hospital. She got to know the man, who worked as a plumber, when they started talking over the phone. They met and fell in love. "We got married in a temple," she said. The couple started living in Noida. In her complaint to police, she said, "On February 7 this year, we had a daughter. On March 22, he took

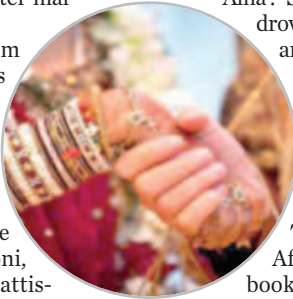
me to his home at the Rait village in Aligarh. There, I found out his name was Afzal Khan. I was forced to read the 'namaz' and stopped from offering my prayers."

She further said, "On April 8, they took my daughter away from me. Then, they converted me forcefully and renamed me 'Alna'." She alleged her in-laws drove her out of the house and dropped her off at Mathura.

SHO Abhay Kumar Sharma of the Lodha police station, where the FIR was registered, said, "Ashok Rajput a.k.a Afzal Khan has been booked under the Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Ordinance and Section 323 of the IPC (voluntarily causing hurt) along with his sisters." No arrest has been made so far.

The woman's statement will be registered in court under Section 164 of the CrPC on Monday.

So far, 32 FIRs have been registered under the state's anti-conversion law since it came into effect in November last year.



Patient kills another patient in hospital

SHAHJAHANPUR

IN a shocking incident, a patient at the district hospital in Shahjahanpur killed another patient over a dispute over a bed.

The victim, Hansraj, had been admitted into the holding area of the hospital and was allotted bed number 21 on Saturday night. Hansraj was admitted after he complained of severe pain in the abdomen.

The accused patient, Abdul Rehman, said to be mentally unstable, was admitted on bed number 27. Rehman, according to reports, went to the washroom on Sunday morning and when he returned, he forgot his bed number. He started arguing with Hansraj alleging that

the latter had forcibly occupied his bed.

As the argument heated up, Rehman lifted Hansraj from the bed and threw him on the ground. Hansraj died on the spot.

The family members of the deceased created a ruckus, accusing the hospital administration of negligence.

The police have detained the accused patient and his father.

The body of the deceased has been sent for post mortem.

Circle Officer Praveen Kumar said that the accused had been taken into custody and the FIR would be lodged on receiving the complaint from the family of the deceased.

Closure of schools in UP extended to April 30

LUCKNOW

WITH Covid cases rising alarmingly in the state, Uttar Pradesh government on Sunday decided to extend the closure of schools from Classes 1 to 12 till April 30.

All coaching centres will also remain closed during this period.

"Classes of all the government/non-



government schools from Classes 1 to 12 will remain closed in the state until April 30. Coaching centres will be closed.

Pre-scheduled examinations may take place during this period. Teachers and other staff can be present as per the requirement," Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said in a meeting of team 11 here.

Earlier, it was announced that students of Classes 1 to 8 studying in the state government schools would be promoted to the next Class without appearing for any exams.

However, the pre-scheduled exams will take place. Teachers and school staff would be called to schools as per the requirement.

Man held for announcing reward on priest's head

MEERUT

THE Meerut police have arrested a youth for allegedly announcing a reward for killing a controversial priest of a temple in Ghaziabad's Dasna area.

The man, Danish Ali, a resident of Meerut, had uploaded a video on a social media platform saying that anyone who beheads the controversial priest, will get a reward of Rs 51 lakh.

The priest, Yati Narsinghanand Saraswati, recently made a controversial statement against the Prophet, for which the Delhi Police booked him for hurting religious sentiments.

The statements were made at

a press conference at Delhi Press Club. Danish is heard in the video purportedly saying, "I will sell my property, jewellery, everything I have and will arrange Rs 51 lakh."

Though Danish did not name

Ali. We have also seized the mobile phone through which he had made the controversial announcement."

Meanwhile, the priest said, "I have already said that I am ready for my assassination. But I stick to my stand. These people have always used terror to silence criticism because they do not have anything substantial to debate." The priest's comments drew sharp reactions from various quarters.

Jamiyat Ulama-I-Hind's general secretary Maulana Mehmood A. Madani has appealed to the Prime Minister to punish him for using 'the filthiest and the most abusive epithets to insult the Prophet'.



Saraswati, he referred to him as the 'priest of the Dasna temple in Ghaziabad'.

Meerut's Superintendent of Police (SP) Vineet Bhatnagar said, "We have arrested Danish

BJP cancels candidature of Kuldeep Sengar's wife

LUCKNOW

THE Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) in Uttar Pradesh has cancelled the ticket of Sangeeta Sengar, wife of former MLA and rape convict Kuldeep Sengar.

The party, two days ago, had announced the candidature of Sangeeta Sengar from Fatehpur Chaurasi seat in the upcoming panchayat elections. Sangeeta had earlier held the post of the zila panchayat chairperson.

UP BJP chief Swatantra Dev Singh said that a fresh panel of candidates was under consideration. Party sources said that Sangeeta's candidature had been withdrawn after the rape victim's family threatened to launch a campaign against her in the polls. Kuldeep Singh Sengar was a BJP MLA who was expelled from the party following



his conviction in a rape case.

Sangeeta Sengar was made the candidate, keeping in mind the influence that her family wields in the area and the sympathy that they have earned after Kuldeep Sengar's arrest in April 2018. Many still believe that he is innocent and has been framed by political rivals.

Kuldeep Sengar, sentenced to life in jail, was disqualified as the member of the Uttar Pradesh legislative assembly last year in February. He is presently lodged in Tihar jail.

Shooting champion to contest UP Panchayat polls

MUZAFFARNAGAR

FROM the hall of fame to the dust and grime of the Panchayat elections -- she has come a long way.

Neha Tomar, the 21-year-old shooter, who has represented the country in several international events and clinched a silver medal in junior shooting world championship held in Germany two years ago, is now trying her luck in the Panchayat elections.

Neha has filed nomination papers for the post of village head in the Makhiyaali village of Muzaffarnagar.

"I want development in my village. And I also want to promote sports among the youths of my region. The post of village head will empower me to do a lot of things," said Neha, who had also won a team gold in the 50m free pistol category in the world shooting event in 2018.

Neha had won a silver medal in Asian air gun Championship



held in Kuwait in the same year.

"If I win, I will try to build a small stadium and an inter college in my area. A large number of girls and women from my village go for work in cloth factories miles away from here. I want to set a training centre and workplace for such women and girls," she said.

A stadium and a college in the village will help youths take up sports. It will also help them in getting government jobs, she added.

Neha is presently pursuing graduation from the DAV College in Muzaffarnagar.

The village's pradhan seat is reserved for OBC women candidates.

Her mother, Renu Chaudhary, said, "I wanted to contest this election. But when we saw her affection towards the villagers, we decided that Neha should contest the Panchayat elections. She wants to do something for the youths and women of this village."

Temples belong to devotees, not rulers

Social media has gained incredible popularity over the past few years as an open source of information and knowledge sharing platform. The original intention of social media space was to interact with larger sections of people in real time and leverage the potential of social media technologies to enhance dissemination of news and have easy access to useful information and connect with different groups. But at least in the Indian context, the social media seems to have become more of a tool to indulge in personal attacks on individuals and their activities and weapon in the hands of political parties to use abusive language against rivals. It does not matter if the targeted person is a politician, an educationist or a religious head or a mystic. Logic takes a backseat in all such cases of postings on social media. Instead of creating a debate on any issue, the attack is diverted on the person who had initiated the debate and he is accused of being anti Hindu or anti some caste or religion.

The latest issues that are trending are whether temples should be made free from the government control

or not and whether it is necessary that the rituals in temples should be performed by a particular community or if properly trained, anyone can become a priest.

This issue gained importance as the Tamil Nadu government last year submitted a report to the Madras High Court stating that in 11,999 temples in the State, there is no pooja or ritual taking place as there is no revenue. In 34,000 temples, there is only one person to manage all the affairs of the space. While 37,000 temples record a revenue less than Rs 10,000 per annum. They estimated that around 12,000 temples will cease to exist in the next few years.

An official statement by the government attests that 1,200 deities have gone missing, stolen. Several police officers have written books claiming that thousands of deities are fake, as the original idols have been stolen and replaced with counterfeits in the last 25 years. This is not social media sensationalism. This is a stark reality that we are facing. If we continue like this, in another 100 years, except for a few major temples, all of them will be extinct. One requires pure devotion and passion and not just employees who have no feelings to manage temple rituals. A temple is not a business but the soul of the community. It can only be managed with tremendous involvement and devotion. It is also said that in Tamil Nadu alone about 44,000 temples with over half a million acres of land are under the management of the government of Tamil Nadu. However, the revenue from all this is only Rs 128 crore per annum. In com-

parison, the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee which has 85 gurdwaras in their hands, their budget is over Rs 1,000 crore. For 44,000 temples that belong to a community comprising 87 percent of the population, a revenue of Rs 128 crore smacks of abysmal mismanagement. For example, look at the way gurdwaras are run – the amount of food that the langars provide, and how they reach out to people in times of need. Imagine the budget that temples could have, given the amount of land revenue they could earn. They could do so much more. The government can then attend to pandemics, natural disasters, and other crises that occur in the region. Sounds interesting but then the question is: “If you give the temples back to the community, will they manage them better? Maybe they will do worse.” Even Gurudwaras managements are not free from extreme kind of politics and there is no guarantee that if you leave the temples to devotees, they will manage them in a wonderful vibrant way. Well, thus goes the debate and such healthy arguments can help the society and the governments to come to a conclusion. But what is happening is a section of social media which claims to be the protector of Hinduism is busy in trolling all those who are in favour of freeing temples from government control instead of building a case for or against. It is time the social media underwent major transformation and became a powerful and useful tool in shaping the society instead of spreading hatred against individuals or institutions.

India, China disengagement at Ladakh: An unfinished agenda

S B ASTHANA

THE 11th round of India China Corps Commander’s meeting has ended with good optics and pleasantly worded PIB release, with no concrete agreement (if any) disseminated so far. Post disengagement of troops in Eastern Ladakh from North and South of Pangong Tso, no disengagement in other areas to include Depsang plains, Gogra, Hot Spring, Demchok, and no further de-escalation, was well predicted by most analysts.

In “Two Session” press conference last month, Wang Yi suggested China and India to strengthen cooperation instead of harbouring suspicion at each other and earlier indicated to get back to business as usual, sidelining border/LAC issue. The Indian Foreign Ministry seems to be conveying that disengagement at all friction points leading to de-escalation, peace and tranquillity on borders are prerequisites to progressing smooth bilateral ties. This rightful Indian stance is adversely affected by indicators like likelihood of Indian permission to progress 45 Chinese projects and 300 Crore contracts to Huawei, which is not in sync with the stance conveyed. The standoff is therefore yet to be resolved, as Indian Army Chief general Naravane puts it “the threat has only abated and it has not gone away altogether”, although domestic events in both countries have dimmed the spotlight on borders.

Chinese political aim was and continues to be China centric Asia and forcing Indian subordination, a necessity to achieve it. This aim could not be achieved despite prolonged standoff in Ladakh so far, but will remain unchanged, even in future. Chinese strategic aim to control Eastern Ladakh was to provide depth to its National Highway G-219, Karakoram Pass and China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), redraw Line of Actual Control (LAC) as per its perception and negotiate border on its terms thereafter. China can claim to have partially achieved it, with continued presence in extra kilometrage in Depsang plains, Gogra, Hot Spring, Demchok areas, where disengagement is yet to take place.

The Indian aim has been to get Chinese back to pre-standoff positions as of April 2020 in all friction points, not to concede unilateral change of LAC, and pursue talks towards its demarcation, hoping to lead to border resolution. With current disengagement, status quo stands achieved in areas north and south of Pangong Tso, at the cost of losing the crucial leverage of giving up occupation of certain heights on Kailash range and north of Pangong Tso, prior to Chinese vacation of ‘Other Areas’. Pursuing disengagement and de-escalation in remaining areas will be an uphill task due to shortage of leverages, given Chinese past track record of junking agreements at will.

China, having marched in areas, where it was not supposed to be, junking all CBMs, as part of overall ‘Incremental Encroachment Strategy’, exploiting first mover advantage, making unfair use of Indian engagement in combating COVID-19 pandemic. China soon found itself handicapped by strong Indian response, resistance and resolve, with proactive actions resulting newly created vulnerabilities to Maldo Garrison and its launch pad, South of Pangong Tso. Despite disengagement in Pangong Tso area, Chinese discomfort due to Indian dispositions in Sub Sector North including DBO, infrastructure development including DSDBO road, as a threat to crucial Tibet-Xinjiang-Pakistan connectivity remains. Despite proactive tactical, operational and daring actions by Indian military, its strategy was reactive.

Both countries justify disengagement process favourable to them, so far, although disengagement is yet to be done by many friction points. The Chinese narrative to its population up to “Two Session” has been that it has got Indians down from heights north and south of Pangong Tso and ensured no Indian presence from Finger 4 to Finger 8, no patrolling by declaring it as buffer zone, while retaining its presence in Depsang plains, Gogra, Hot Spring and Demchok areas. It can, therefore, claim to have launched a successful incremental encroachment operation and edged forward 1959/60 claim line in ‘other areas’. The explainers of Chinese narrative will find it difficult to explain their gain by moving forward from Finger 8 to Finger 4 and then speedily withdrawing back to the same location, indicating weakness of PLA to endure winters in high altitude area, besides making Maldo Garrison vulnerable and risking war, had Indians not obliged by pulling back from heights in Pangong Tso area.

The Indian narrative to its critiques is that it has been able to successfully push Chinese back to status quo ante positions as existed pre standoff in Pangong Tso area, the stance which India maintained throughout. Amongst rest areas, like Gogra, Hot Spring and Demchok, its work in progress to disengage and restore patrolling rights. Depsang is a legacy issue of decades, where patrolling points to limit ITBP/ Army patrols were designated to avoid confrontation. Willy-nilly, nearly two-thirds of Depsang Plateau remained outside the purview of physical domination by us, which allowed PLA to establish intensive infrastructure and habitat in the area. Depsang will therefore, require separate discussion. India can also draw solace from the fact that, while it is being denied patrolling to the patrol points on Depsang Plateau East of the area Bottleneck inside the Raki Nallah, it has also denied PLA patrols movement West of Bottleneck, to Chinese claimed area close to Burtse.

The explainers of Indian narrative will continue to find it difficult to explain why disengagement was not sequenced on ‘first in and first out basis’, meaning thereby that India should have vacated Kailash Range heights only after China had vacated the areas, where it advanced in Depsang plains, Gogra, Hot Spring and Demchok areas, since April 2020. It is reasonable to believe that negotiators at all levels must have tried their best and may have had their compulsions, but IF Chinese do not act on remaining part of the agreement, it will leave India at a disadvantage, due to shortage of worthwhile leverages. Notwithstanding the political debates over legacy of Depsang issue, it remains strategically important and a threat to DBO and DS-DBO Road; hence a concern for military professionals. Indian aim should be not to concede Chinese attempt to redraw LAC as LAC-2020. In light of no major breakthrough in 22nd round of China-India border talks, I do not expect any worthwhile development on delineation, delimitation for demarcation of LAC, which, is necessary to prevent repeated standoffs, even if the present one sees some resolution. This is inescapable and must be insisted. A temporary solution/side-lining main issue is recipe for the next standoff, leading to LOC-ization of LAC further. Chinese will like to keep border unsettled, till the time the political cost of Not settling it, becomes higher than doing so, for CCP, China. Its efforts of bilateral border talks with Bhutan and Nepal including trijunctions, are to create further complications in the long-term resolution of borders.

India must be prepared for ‘Two Front War’ as a worst case scenario, and continue capacity building in all domains, including maritime arena. Ongoing infrastructure development along borders should lead to settling of locals in villages along LAC with better facilities, to ward off Chinese design of developing hundreds of new villages along LAC. Strategic partnerships with like-minded democracies and collective naval posturing to create multifront situation for China are efforts in right direction. There is a need for alternative supply chain, trade and technological ecosystem, independent of China for which some initial steps taken by Quad countries need to be pursued on strategic plane.

(The writer is a strategic and security analyst, a veteran Infantry General. He is the Chief Instructor, United Service Institution of India. The views expressed are personal)



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Low interest rates will not beget growth

THE WAY AHEAD



Dr Bharat Jhunjhunwala

THE Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has continued its policy of low interest rates in the recently announced monetary policy. Commercial banks can continue to borrow monies from RBI at a low rate of 4 percent per annum. The average cost incurred by the banks in acquiring deposits, however, remains more than this because they have already taken fixed deposits from the public at higher interest rates. Thus, the average cost of acquiring deposits at present is about 7 percent. This average cost would have been higher if the RBI has increased the lending rates. The banks are presently lending at an interest rate of 9 to 10 percent. This lending rate would be higher if the RBI were to increase the interest rate from the present 4 percent.

The thinking is that the low interest rates would encourage consumers to take loans for consumption and encourage businesspersons to take loan for investment. For example, a consumer may take loan to buy a bike, and a businessperson may take loan to produce the bike. In this situation both consumption and investment will increase and wheel of the economy will start to move. This strategy, however, is dependent on the consumer and businessperson being encouraged by the low interest rates and to actually taking loans for consumption and investment. Our experience is not so encouraging on this. The RBI has continuously reduced the repo rate from 8 percent in 2014 to 4 percent now but the growth rate has been falling in tandem. This means that other factors are at play.

The alternative before the government was to use the fiscal policy for jumpstarting growth. The government could cut its “unproductive” expenditures such as increased salaries and DA to government servants and making a new parliament house. I consider these expenditures to be “unproductive” because the economy would continue to chug along even if these expenditures were not made. The government servants would not resign en masse if DA was not increased. The sitting of the parliament would not reduce if the new parliament house was not made. The Government could use the monies thus obtained to make direct cash transfers to the people or by investing in making water conservation structures like check dams. These cash transfer and expenditures would create demand in the market and the businessperson would make investment to fulfil that demand even if the interest rate was high. Let us not forget that high interest rates before 2014 were high at 8 percent yet businesspersons were borrowing to make investments.

The monetary and fiscal policies—both try to establish a fortuitous cycle of demand and investment. The monetary policy tries to build this cycle by encouraging the consumer to take a loan for consumption and the businessperson to take a loan for investment. The fiscal policy tries to build this same cycle by direct placing purchasing power in the



government servants would not resign en masse if DA was not increased. The sitting of the parliament would not reduce if the new parliament house was not made. The government could use the monies thus obtained to make direct cash transfers to the people or by investing in making water conservation structures like check dams. These cash transfer and expenditures would create demand in the market and the businessperson would make investment to fulfil that demand even if the interest rate was high. Let us not forget that high interest rates before 2014 were at 8 percent yet businesspersons were borrowing to make investments

hand of the consumer by cash transfers for doing the same by employing workers to make water harvesting structures.

There is a fundamental difference in the two policies, however. The government too borrows from the RBI at the low interest rates that are made for encouraging investments. The RBI has announced, for example, that it will provide loan of Rs 1 lakh crore in the present quarter to the government. The government is using this loan to maintain its consumption in these times of pandemic. The burden of this printing will fall on us in future because inflation will increase and the value of our currency will decline. In other words, the monetary policy begets us present benefits by putting burden on our future. The impact of fiscal policy is exactly the opposite. If the government reduces the salaries of the government servants or imposes higher tax on petroleum, the burden will fall on the government servants and the people today, while the benefits from the making of water harvesting structures will accrue in the future. For example, the government imposed taxes in the 1950s and established the IITs, the benefits of which have accrued in the next many decades. In this way, the fiscal policy puts burden on the present and begets benefits in the future.

The Covid-19 crisis does not seem to be going away anytime soon. The death rate appears to be reducing because of vaccination. However, the continued spread of the virus and its many mutations create an uncertainty. Therefore, the consumer is not likely to borrow for buying a bike; nor a businessperson is likely to borrow to put up a bike factory. The RBI policy is like offering low interest rates to a farmer during a severe drought. We should remember that banks in a number of countries like Japan have been offering loans

to businesspersons at zero interest rates, yet businesspersons do not borrow because there is no demand in the market. The present approach is destined to fail as the continuous lowering of interest rates have failed in the last six years.

The government should instead use the fiscal instruments to jumpstart growth at present. It should reduce unproductive government consumption. A reduction in salaries of the government servants will not lead to much reduction in demand in the market because the government servants use much of their income for buying gold and making other unproductive expenditures. It should increase productive investments such as in water harvesting structures. It should increase taxes on imported goods so that more production and job creation takes place within the country. It should make cash transfers to the people to create demand in the market. The cash transfers will create a huge demand because these people are craving for consumption. The businesspersons will to take loans at a higher interest rate and establish a bike factory because demand for bikes will be generated in the market by these measures.

The present time is of crisis. We do not know how the Covid-19 pandemic will play out. This is not the time to make merry today by pawing our already difficult future by lowering the interest rates and maintaining already unsustainable levels of government consumption. This is the time to cut corners in the already difficult times and ensure a better future by cutting government consumption, increasing import taxes and on petroleum.

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

Sadhguru is true social reformist

MEGHA PARMAR

Sanatan Dharma or Hinduism (as it is commonly known) is one of the world’s oldest living religion. In the last few centuries, it has gone through major social reforms. The turning point in the history of Hinduism was in 18th century when Raja Ram Mohan Roy’s Brahmo Samaj opposed Sati Pratha system, an ancient practice in which wife used to immolate herself at the funeral pyre of husband. This wasn’t an easy task; violent protests broke out in Bengal against him. Even his own mother threw him out of house. Whether it was Dayanand Saraswati’s Arya Samaj or Ambedkar raising voice against untouchability, no social reform has been a cake walk in Hindu history. Orthodox Hindus have always opposed any major reform and yet Hinduism has survived as a religion where from monotheism to polytheism and even atheism have been beautiful included.

Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev has always been very vocal about almost all contemporary issues and has his way of connecting with millennials. Recently, he has picked up an age-old demand of freeing Hindu temples from government control. To address the apprehension of castiesm coming back in temples once they are free from government control, he said in a TV interview, “It is very clear today that irrespective of your caste, you can be a teacher, you can be a soldier, you can be

Let us first look at why he is not just any spiritual leader but a social reformist in a true sense. Temples in Isha yoga centre premises are open to all irrespective of caste, creed and religion. What’s more interesting is their website says, anyone who can devote a certain number of days can volunteer at their temples. “We have never asked anyone their caste or nationalism when they come to volunteer,” says Swami Suyagna from Isha Foundation. Another interesting aspect to observe is, Ling Bhairavi Temple at Isha has set an example by allowing women inside temple during menstruation. Sadhguru has offered spiritual opportunity to everyone equally, that why one gets to see almost equal number of men and women monks at their ashram

anything you want, if you can get the necessary training. The same goes for the priesthood, whoever irrespective of caste, creed or religion, if you have devotion in your heart and willing to train for what is needed you can become that.” This hasn’t gone well with some people who are not ready for this social reform. There are so many videos, pictures and excerpts from his books being circulated on social media to prove he is anti-Hindu.

Let us first look at why he is not just any spiritual leader but a social reformist in a true sense. Temples in Isha yoga centre premises are open to all irrespective of caste, creed and religion. What’s more interesting is their website says, anyone who can devote a certain number of days

can volunteer at their temples. “We have never asked anyone their caste or nationalism when they come to volunteer,” says Swami Suyagna from Isha Foundation. Another interesting aspect to observe is, Ling Bhairavi Temple at Isha has set an example by allowing women inside temple during menstruation. Sadhguru has offered spiritual opportunity to everyone equally, that why one gets to see almost equal number of men and women monks at their ashram.

And yet Jaggi has always sided with sticking to traditions wherever they are already established and have a clear explanation about it. One can’t forget his stand on Sabarimala and Jallikattu which for sure would not go well with his urban

followers. Now, if he really cared for maintaining his bhakts, he won’t be taking such extremely opposite stands in today’s polarised world. Also, when he does not intend to disturb the existing traditions, is there really a concern. When he says whoever is willing to go through “required training” means if a temple requires a priest to study sharstras, he or she should study them. Is this anti-Brahmin? Or is it just that people don’t want to part ways with their authority which they have got more because of where they are born and not what they have studied?

Sadhguru is by far the one of the most popular modern guru amongst the Indian youth. He is the one representing Indian culture at international forums. He starts his session on World Yoga Day at United Nations with a Sanskrit shloka. From his attire to his ideas everything is a true reflection of Indian ethos. Isha Samskriti, legally registered as a Vedic Pathshala run by his foundation is educating children in classical music, ancient Kalar art and of course “Sanskrit”. and the best part is, unlike many religious gurus, who create a fear in masses by saying “Sanatan Dharma is in danger”, he says that Sanatan (existential truth) can never be in danger.

Sadhguru’s pro or anti Hindu stand maybe debatable, his contribution to reform social evils is not. However, the backlash against him proves that reforms are not easy even in 21st century.

(The views expressed are personal)

VACCINE STOCKS MAY LAST FOR THREE DAYS ONLY

HYDERABAD

TELANGANA has also joined the States facing shortage of Covid-19 vaccines as the state government has urged the Centre to immediately provide at least 30 lakh doses.

Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar wrote to the Union Health Secretary that the State was left with only 5.66 lakh doses of vaccine which would last for three days at maximum.

"Covid-19 vaccination has been ramped up in the state. Due to concerted efforts, the number of vaccinations in the state, in one day, crossed 1.15 lakh yesterday. In the coming days this will be enhanced to over two lakh per day," Somesh Kumar wrote in a letter dated April 10. "Therefore, I would like to request you to urgently provide at least 30 lakh doses of



vaccine to Telangana for the next 15 days," reads the letter.

The chief secretary sent the letter a day after state health of-

ficials claimed that there was no shortage of vaccines in the state. Meanwhile, the state health authorities administered

1,62,385 doses on Saturday. This is the highest number of doses given in a single day so far. They include 9,090 beneficiaries who received second dose.

According to the Director of Public Health, the cumulative doses given rose to 20,61,395 including 2,99,742 second doses.

Those given vaccines on Saturday include 781 healthcare workers, 22,578 frontline workers and 1,39,026 beneficiaries who are 45 years and above.

The health department has ramped up vaccination over the last one week and announced that vaccination will be conducted in all government and private vaccination centres on all days including Sundays and public holidays. The number of vaccination centres has gone up to 1,176 including 944 government-run centres.

Auto drivers JAC backs Sharmila's new party

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

TELANGANA Auto drivers JAC while welcoming the launching of new political party by YSR Sharmila has announced its decision to confer 'Telangana Nightingale' and 'Telangana Rising Star' titles soon on YS Sharmila for her bold decision to 'Live & Die' for Telangana cause in future. Besides she will be weighed in coins.

Mohd Amanullah Khan, the convenor, stated in a press statement that the JAC has also decided to support to Sharmila's proposed a 3-day hunger strike in Hyderabad from April 15, demanding that the government issue job notifications without further delay. Further, he said that he had been to Khammam day before yesterday along with some of his supporters accompanied with Sharmila and came back to the city the same night

The JAC has also decided to support Sharmila's proposed 3-day hunger strike in Hyderabad from April 15, demanding that the government issue job notifications without further delay

after attending the public meeting.

Khan informed that his committee members had met Sharmila at her Lotus Pond residence one month back and held

talks with her and had sought her clarification on prohibition issue where upon she made it clear that YSR in fact, was in favour of enforcing prohibition in a phased manner and that her party would adopt the same policy and she also promised that her party will support the Auto Drivers just and reasonable demands and would join in the Auto Drivers Struggle directly as an when necessary.

"Auto drivers have the history of supporting NTR, KCR when they had launched new political parties before coming to power. Similarly, when the auto divers opposed any political party it lost power" said Khan. "Now that the auto drivers are supporting YSR Sharmila's party we are confident and sure that her party will come to power in next assembly elections with thumping majority," he added. Finally, he said that new party was needed to question the powers-that-be and to snatch power from wrong-doers.



ICMR appoints BP Acharya as Advisor

HYDERABAD

THE ICMR (Indian Council of Medical Research) has appointed BP Acharya, former Spl CS and DG of MCRHRDIT, as the Advisor for their important national project, 'National Animal Resource Facility for Bio Medical Research (NARF-BR)' coming up on 100 acres in Genome Valley near Shamirpet. This is in recognition of his efforts to create the world-class life sciences cluster in Genome Valley and his contribution to the sector. This project with an investment of Rs 300 crore will cater to the pharma and biopharma/vaccine industry in the country for pre-clinical animal trials.

90 transfer points for Swachh Hyderabad

- Cost for each Secondary Collection Center and Transfer Point is 2.72 cr
- Around three SCTPs would be established in each circle
- Authorities find the availability of open spaces in circles challenging

VASAVI KALERU
HYDERABAD



IN order to make solid waste collection process easier Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) plans to establish 90 SCTPs (Secondary Collection Centers and Transfer Points) in the city. Around 3 SCTPs would be established in each circle.

Currently, the municipal solid waste is being collected from door to door in swachh auto tippers, which then gets unloaded at transfer station. Later the same is then loaded in the bigger open top tipper (about 25 Ton GV) covered with tarpaulin sheet at the respective transfer stations and is sent to treatment & disposal facility at Jawahar Nagar.

Briefing on the development of garbage collection and trans-

fer stations in the city to The Hans India, Vijayalakshmi Gadwal, Mayor, GHMC said, "For the Integrated Municipal Solid waste Management Project small capacity decentralized structures named as Secondary Collection & Transfer Points are being established in all zones. Currently, 34 locations have been studied for feasibility of which, 11 locations are already constructed while the remaining 8 locations are under construction and 15 locations are found non feasible. We proposed to establish 90 such SCTPs with a minimum of 3 SCTPs per circle."

"Each SCTP to be built in an area of 100 Sqm and designated for mechanized operations in compliance to Solid waste Management (SWM) Rules 2016. The

new system uses Portable self compactors, static compactors, hermetically sealed containers and hook mounted vehicles for handling and transporting of waste. Around 55 such vehicles have been procured already," she added. The authorities claim that availability of feasible open spaces in circles is challenging as public representatives and locals are raising objections. Estimated cost for each SCTP is 2.72 crore.

SCTPs would facilitate garbage collection activity and solid waste management, and the efficiency of the activities will also be increased as secondary stations will help garbage collectors to reduce turnaround time and distance travelled by collection vehicles, the authorities assured.



Pawan Kalyan goes into quarantine

Two of his personal staff tested positive for Covid-19

HYDERABAD

ACTOR-TURNED -POLITICIAN and the president of Jana Sena Party (JSP), Pawan Kalyan, on Sunday went into quarantine after two of his personal staff members tested positive for Covid-19. He took the decision based on the advice of doctors. The party leadership released a statement to this effect.

It may be noted here that several office-bearers of the party and Pawan's personal staff had been infected with the virus during the past few days. Pawan is, however, monitoring the day-to-day activities of the party by holding teleconferences with leaders. Meanwhile, the fresh release of Pawan Kalyan Vakeel Saab is doing well at the box office.

AGE BAR FOR RECRUITMENTS

Congress demands hike in upper age limit

HYDERABAD

AICC National Spokesperson Dr Sravan Dasoju on Sunday demanded the Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao to increase the upper age limit of youth by 10 years to enable them to apply for all the job recruitment notifications issued in Telangana. "The upper age limit should be fixed at 44 years, as done in the past, from the existing 34 years that is eliminating millions of beleaguered unemployed and qualified Telangana youth from applying for new jobs in the state," says senior Congress party leader. Dr Sravan today dashed out a letter to the Chief Minister in which he urged to consider the rising unemployment in Telangana as a social emergency and appealed to him to constitute a special taskforce to address the sensitive issue with high priority to make sure our youth are protected from the desperate and frustrated conditions. While setting aside politics, Dr Sravan requested an all party meeting to discuss the unemployment issues to find out a way forward to provide them adequate job opportunities in the public and private sectors.

"As you may be aware that the recent job notification issued on 31 March 2021 by TSPSC has reduced the candidates upper age

limit at 34 years, thereby eliminating lakhs of unemployed youth who have aggressively participated in Telangana movement ever since the year 2009. The unemployment problem in Telangana and also the prevailing conditions of the pandemic Covid-19 outbreak crippled the normal life of every individual including the unemployed youth. In a context, where most of them are still eagerly waiting for their turn for a government job and to have better livelihoods, reducing the upper age limit to 34 years is a brutal shock to them", Dr Sravan explained. He further stated that the majority of the unemployed youth are in deep distress, unable to face their parents, family and friends, unable to get married and settle in life and leading a miserable life. Some of them are finally committing suicides with hopelessness. He pointed out that the Government of Telangana had relaxed the upper age ceiling by 10 years through various GOs previously between 2015 and 2017 with which the candidates eligibility has gone up from 34 years to 44 years and that rational act certainly benefited some candidates in the past. But due to lack of big recruitments in the last 7 years, the youth got frustrated and left without any option other than to wait for a fresh notification.

BJP promises comprehensive development of Tirupati

- BJP-Jana Sena leaders release election manifesto
- Propose to remove government control over the pilgrim city and bring it under an empowered board consisting of Hindu members
- Mega textile park to be set up in the LS constituency

HANS NEWS SERVICE
TIRUPATI

ATTRIBUTING the credit of all development works in Tirupati Parliamentary constituency to Narendra Modi-led Central government, BJP - Jana Sena combine has promised for further comprehensive development of the city.

The leaders of both parties including Somu Veerajulu, Nadendla Manohar, candidate fighting the by-poll K Ratna Prabha, former

State party president Kanna Lakshminarayana, party leaders Vishnuvardhan Reddy, TG Venkatesh, GVL Narasimha Rao and Dr P Hariprasad have released the election manifesto here on Sunday.

The leaders said that they will make the holy Tirupati city as a world famous Hindu Dharmic place where other religious propaganda will be curtailed completely. They want to remove government control over the city and it should be brought under an empowered board consisting of Hindu members.

The BJP wants to provide the expertise in local handicrafts by including it in the curriculum for higher education students. It also promised to establish a mega investment Textile Park in the constituency. It wants to ensure loan facility without any surety of up to Rs 1 crore to two SC/ST people and women by each government sector bank branch. Youth will be provided Mudra loans extensively to encourage self-employment.

The manifesto promised the establishment of critical care hospitals in Chittoor and Nellore districts. A new medical college with a hospital will be set up in the constituency by the Central government. More than 30 schools will be developed as model schools in the constituency under the new education policy.

Providing public amenities in pilgrim centres like Tirupati and Sri Kalahasti is another promise. For this public toilets construction and other amenities will be taken up.

Under the 'Jalame Jeevanam' scheme every house will be provided drinking water with the help of the Central government.

Every farmer will be given a kisan credit card and not less than Rs 2 lakh loan facility with low rate of interest. By removing the silt in Pulicat more employment opportunities will be created. The leaders assured that the constituency will witness a model development in the next few years.

'Tirupati LS by-poll will be referendum on Jagan's rule'



Minister for Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy addressing the media at the YSRCP office in Tirupati on Sunday

HANS NEWS SERVICE
TIRUPATI

STATING that the YSRCP is ready to take the Tirupati Lok Sabha by-election verdict as a referendum on the performance of Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's government, Minister for Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy dared the opposition to follow suit.

Speaking to the media here on Sunday, the Minister said that if his party is defeated in the prestigious by-election to Tirupati Lok Sabha constituency, the YSRCP MPs are ready to step down and challenged the main opposition party TDP to tender the resignation of its three MPs

along with Raghuramakrishnama Raju, the rebel YSRCP MP opposing the ruling party and dared Naidu to accept his challenge. Exuding confidence that his party will come out with flying colours in the crucial by-election by winning with a huge margin more than the previous 2019 election, Peddireddy observed, "The excellent services our party rendered in the last 20 months will see us get thumping victory in the Tirupati by-election."

In this connection, he said the Chief Minister's election meeting programme was cancelled due to the surge in Covid cases in Tirupati area.

Keeping in view the safety of the people, the Chief Minister, after taking into account the

medical experts and officers' advise dropped his plan to campaign for the party in the election and preferred to appeal to the voters of the constituency through his letter, he explained while refuting the opposition parties attributing various motives to the cancellation of CM's meeting. The YSRCP senior leader also took strong exception to the leaders of the opposition parties slighting the candidature of party nominee Dr Gurumurthy and also going into personal details like his professional service and added that as the fear of defeat was staring them, the opposition leaders including Chandrababu Naidu and Sunil Deodhar were resorting to cheap tactics in the elec-

tion campaign.

Making a scathing attack on Jana Sena chief Pawan Kalyan who he said is the Dattaputra of Naidu, the YSRCP leader observed how could Pawn, who once criticised the BJP as a spoiled laddu sail with the same party now.

Now Pawan Kalyan joined BJP but is tacitly working for TDP, he alleged.

Meanwhile, Agriculture Minister Kurasala Kannababu too brushed aside TDP comments on the cancellation of CM Jagan's election tour to Tirupati.

Speaking to the media here on Sunday, he said the Chief Minister's tour was put off only due to the spike in Covid-19 cases but not any other reason, criticising the BJP and TDP leaders' malicious propaganda alleging that the Chief Minister was afraid of electioneering for want of public response. Claiming that YSRCP will win with a thumping majority, he dared the BJP and TDP leaders on the promises made in AP Reorganisation Act, SCS and also Vizag Steel Plant.



BJP State president Somu Veerajulu, Jana Sena PAC chairman Nadendla Manohar and other leaders releasing election manifesto in Tirupati on Sunday

Resume talks with protesting farmers, Haryana Min Vij urges Tomar

WON'T LET CHIEF MINISTER KHATTAR ENTER BADAULI VILLAGE, SAYS RAKESH TIKAIT

CHANDIGARH

HARYANA Home Minister Anil Vij has written to Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar, urging him to resume talks with farmers protesting against the Centre's farm laws as the Coronavirus scare looms large.

Maintaining that a surge in coronavirus cases is being seen across the country and the situation is "turning bad" in Haryana too, Vij said he is worried about the farmers protesting on the state borders with Delhi.

"All possible efforts are being made to bring the corona situation under control in Haryana but my worry pertains to thousands of agitating farmers who are sitting on the borders of Haryana and I have

to save them from corona," the minister said. "There is also a worry that because of them the disease may not spread in the rest of the state," wrote Vij in his letter, dated April 9.

He also mentioned that being in agitation mode, farmers are not able to follow all COVID-related guidelines. The Centre has made a lot of efforts to resolve the problems of farmers and held multiple rounds of talks with them "but due to some reasons, the solution is yet to come", he said.

"A situation of uncertainty prevails as there have been no talks for a long time. I am of the belief that a problem can be solved through dialogue," he said. "Therefore, I request you that the talks should be resumed so that the issue is resolved and the protest ends," Vij said in his Hindi letter. Meanwhile, thou-



sands of farmers, mostly from Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh, have been camping at three border points of Delhi -- Singhu, Tikri (along Haryana), and Ghazipur -- demanding a repeal of the three farm laws enacted by the Centre in September last year.

Farmer leader Rakesh Tikait on Sunday said that the Samyukta Kisan Morcha will not allow Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar to enter Badauli village for an event on April 14.

Speaking to the media at the Singhu border, Tikait alleged that Khattar is coming to "disrupt the amity" in the area in the garb of unveiling a statue of B R Ambedkar. "We are not against Baba Saheb's statue, we are against Khattar. Samyukta Kisan Morcha has decided that as long as our protest is on we

are against the CM and the deputy CM. "He is not coming here to unveil the statue, but as per the BJP's plot he is coming here to disrupt the amity among people. And we, along with the Khap Panchayat, we will not allow him to do that," Tikait said. Khattar is scheduled to visit Badauli village in Panipat to unveil a statue of Ambedkar on the occasion of the Dalit icon's birth anniversary on April 14. "We won't let him enter the village. If anyone else wants to unveil the statue, they can do it," Tikait added.

The Centre says the new laws will free farmers from middlemen, giving them more options to sell their crops. The protesting farmers, however, say the laws will weaken the minimum support price (MSP) system and leave them at the mercy of big corporates.

WINDOWS



Fire at Real Tech Park Tower near Vashi Railway Station, in Navi Mumbai on Sunday

Mom of lynched cop dies of shock

Patna: Urmila Devi, the 70-year-old mother of a senior Bihar police official Ashwani Kumar, who was allegedly lynched by a mob in West Bengal, died of shock in Purnea district on Sunday. Police said that the Station House Officer (SHO) of Kishanganj police station Kumar led a police team to Pantapara village near Panjipara under Gopalpokhar police station area at Islampur district of West Bengal early on Saturday morning when a mob attacked them. Kumar, 50, died on the spot. Soon after hearing the news, Devi, who was a heart patient, became unconscious and went in a deep state of shock that resulted in her death.

2 kids die in Noida fire

Noida: A major fire broke out in a village in Uttar Pradesh's Noida on Sunday, leaving two children dead and destroying around 150 shanties, police said. The fire broke out around 1 pm in the JJ cluster near Behlolpur village under Phase 3 police station limits, according to officials. "Around a dozen fire tenders were deployed at the sight to control the blaze. The fire has been controlled now but due to wind there is still smoke left," Deputy Commissioner of Police, Central Noida, Harish Chander said. "Around 150 shanties got destroyed in the fire and the bodies of two children have been recovered.

NIA arrests cop Riyaz

Mumbai The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested Assistant Police Inspector Riyaz Kaji here, who allegedly helped Sachin Vaze in connection with the explosive laden SUV found outside Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani's residence. An NIA official related to the probe told IANS, "Kaji was arrested on Saturday night." The official said that he was arrested after his role was identified by the anti-terror probe agency. The NIA has arrested Vaze on March 13 after taking over the probe into the explosive laden vehicle. The agency has recorded the statement of Kaji and several others. The agency also recorded the statement of former Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh in connection with the case.

FORCED TO STEAL VAX: DOC

'For God's sake, get vaccine, drugs': Lilavati Hospital doc's appeal Remdesivir shortage: Union Min Gadkari dials Sun Pharma chief

NEW DELHI/MUMBAI/NAGPUR

AS the cases surge, the knives are out with the Centre and the State governments flinging charges and accusing each other of messing up the anti-Covid battle. The State governments say they're running short of vaccines and being forced to close vaccination delivery centres. The Centre accuses States like Maharashtra of letting vaccine doses go to waste.

India now has all three coronavirus fast-spreading variants that are worrying the global medical community -- B.117, first detected in the UK; B.1351, now dominant in South Africa; and Brazil's P.1. And now a "double-mutant" variant found in India. Because of a severe lack of genome-sequencing labs, we have little idea of how fast and to what extent these variants are spreading across the country, though the government has said it will step up its genome-sequencing testing to get a better idea.

Hospitals in Mumbai are bearing the brunt of the surge. A video from Mumbai's premier Lilavati hospital was widely circulated on social media, showing how the hospital was forced to convert its lobby into a Covid ward. A senior doctor of the hospital voiced his desperate appeal on camera. The hospital was not only short of vaccines but also life-saving drugs like Remdesivir, said Dr Jalil Parkar, a pulmonary consultant with the hospital, according to NDTV report

"In my hospital there are no vaccines for the last two-three days. There is a shortage of



Marina beach wears a deserted look, as coronavirus cases surge in Chennai on Sunday

Remdesivir, there is shortage of Tosilizubam. We are having to beg, borrow, steal," Dr Parkar said. "My earnest request for God's sake please see to it that Remdesivir, Tosilizubam, vaccination -- they are available. Because that's the only way we can save lives. The only way we can conquer Covid 19. So for god's sake, let there be no red tapism, let there be no discussion, but let there be action," he added.

Union minister Nitin Gadkari has called up Sun Pharma's chief to arrange for 10,000 injections of Remdesivir in Nagpur in view of a short-

age of the medicine. Research conducted by the Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (IGIB) revealed that the immunity for Covid-19 lasts for 6-7 months at least, but between 20% and 30% of those infected lose this immunity after 6 months. "The key finding of 20-30% of subjects losing virus-neutralizing activity, despite staying seropositive, at 6-month follow-up helps understand why the large second wave has not spared cities like Mumbai with high seropositivity," Dr Anurag Agarwal, the director of IGIB said in a tweet.

Cooch Behar killings

Didi will resign on May 2: Shah; genocide: Mamata

KOLKATA

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday said that he is ready to resign from his post only if the people of West Bengal ask him to do so.

The senior BJP leader, however, asserted that Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee will have to quit on May 2 as the Trinamool Congress will lose the ongoing assembly elections. The TMC chief has demanded Shah's resignation over the killing of four people in firing by CISF personnel during the fourth phase of voting in Sitalkuchi in Cooch Behar district on Saturday.

"Didi has been asking for my resignation. If the people of West Bengal demand that I put down my papers, I am ready to do so with my head bowed. But Mamata will have to quit the CM's post on May 2," Shah said, while addressing a rally in Basirhat in North 24 Parganas district.

Training his guns on Banerjee, Shah alleged that she is opposing the Citizenship (Amendment) Act to appease illegal immigrants, who he claimed take benefits of welfare schemes but indulge in riots.

"What is Didi's problem if Matuas get citizenship? Her problem is that illegal immigrants will be displeased. Such people don't have the right to rule the state any longer. Illegal immigrants take benefits of welfare schemes like free ration but indulge in riots," he said.

Terming the killing of four TMC workers by Central forces in Cooch Behar during the fourth phase of polling as 'genocide', West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee called the Prime Minister and Home Minister of the country 'incompetent'.



BJP candidate from Tapan constituency Budhrai Tudu, during his door-to-door campaign near Balurghat in South Dinajpur district, on Sunday

Addressing the mediapersons, Mamata alleged, "It is genocide. We have decided to observe today as a black day. The forces fired on them directly. The CISF is trained to provide security to industries and not to control a mob. I could not sleep last night but the prime minister was eating sweets. Such an incompetent government, incompetent prime minister, incompetent home minister." "I could not meet the families. I will meet them on April 14. I cannot be stopped. I respect the Election Commission. But they are changing the rules. This is now the BJP Code of Conduct. The system cannot be changed with the interest of a party. The institution will continue forever and the system is to be maintained. Everybody wants a free and fair election," added the TMC chief.

Gyanvapi petitioner gets threat call, given security

VARANASI

HARIHAR Pandey, the petitioner in the Gyanvapi mosque case on behalf of Swayambhu Jyotirlinga Bhagwan Vishweshwar, has received a life threat on his phone after a local court pronounced the verdict directing the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to conduct an archaeological survey of the Gyanvapi compound to ascertain if a temple existed at the spot earlier. The police officials have deputed two constables at Pandey's residence for his security.

Pandey informed that he received a phone call from an unknown number on the day of the verdict.

The caller threatened Pandey that he would be killed. Pandey called senior police officials and informed them about the threat following which ACP Avadhesh Pandey met him and collected all the details.

The ACP said the phone number is being traced and investigation is on. Harihar Pandey, Pandit Somnath Vyas and Ramrang Sharma had filed the first petition in the case on behalf of Swayambhu Jyotirlinga Bhagwan Vishweshwar at a civil court in 1991. Pandey is now the only surviving petitioner among the three.

Advocate Vijay Shankar Rastogi as the 'next friend' of Swayambhu Jyotirlinga Bhagwan Vishweshwar had filed an application in the court of civil judge in December 2019, requesting for the survey of the entire Gyanvapi compound by ASI.

Varanasi now a Sanskrit city

LUCKNOW

VARANASI, the parliamentary constituency of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, will now be known as the Sanskrit city in the world.

Varanasi has the maximum number of Sanskrit schools as well as the highest number of students studying Sanskrit. There are more than 110 Sanskrit schools that are functional in Varanasi.

Two more will be added to this tally by the new session while 13 new Sanskrit schools are also going to be opened across the state by the Yogi Adityanath government. According to the government spokesman, the Yogi Adityanath government is going to set up Sanskrit Directorate on the lines of Directorates of Secondary and Basic Education. After the creation of the Directorate, Sanskrit language will get a new identity.

Apart from this, for the first time in Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath started releasing government press notes in Sanskrit. He also tweeted in Sanskrit from his official Twitter account.

After the Chief Minister's initiative, the Sanskrit Board has also started promoting Sanskrit language in the state in a big way. According to the officials, the state will get 13 new Sanskrit schools and these schools have already met their prescribed standards. Out of these, two will be opened in Kashi and one in Jaunpur.

A total of 1,164 Sanskrit schools are being run by the Uttar Pradesh Secondary Sanskrit Education Council, of which 971 schools are aided schools.

More than 97,000 students are studying in these Sanskrit schools. In order to connect Sanskrit schools with modern education, the computer education and NCERT books are being provided to students from Class 6 to 12.



Lulu owner's copter crash lands

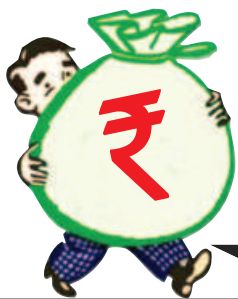
KOCHI

A helicopter carrying prominent NRI businessman M A Yusuff Ali, his wife and four others crash-landed at a marshy land near here on Sunday morning, police said. All passengers including Yusuff Ali, who is Chairman of international retail group Lulu Group, his wife and two other passengers along with two pilots on board the chopper owned by the company have been admitted to a private hospital here. "All of them are safe. They are currently under observation," a top official of the Lakeshore hospital where they are treated told PTI. The incident occurred at Panangad area at around 9 am on Sunday "Yusuff Ali, currently in Kerala, was on a short trip from his home in Kochi to visit a relative at



nearby hospital. Due to the sudden deterioration of weather conditions and heavy rains, the experienced pilots decided to make precautionary landing at a safe place to prevent any risk to the life of the passengers or public at large," the statement said.

“In business, I look for economic castles protected by unbreachable ‘moats’.”
—Warren Buffett



HANS INVEST

Stocks.MFs.Bonds.Commodities



THE HANS INDIA
DELHI MONDAY 12 APRIL 2021

Corona cases, global cues drive gold prices

DR HC UPADHYAY

HYDERABAD

Considering the prevailing geo-political uncertainty coupled with rapidly spreading second strain of corona virus pandemic, the movements of the precious metals globally during the week ended Saturday, has been on the expected lines. Undoubtedly, the share market is the most vulnerable place where impact of every event, positive or negative, is felt almost instantaneously.

Consequently, New York gold closed at \$1,744.50 (per Ounce) while silver followed the suit and closed at \$25.25 (per Ounce). Platinum and palladium closed at \$1,195 (per Ounce) and \$2,550 (per Ounce) respectively.

Other economic parameters remained moderate. Brent closed at \$62.95 (per barrel) while Crude MCX oil was quoted at Rs 4,432 (per barrel). While Gold MCX stood at Rs 46,610 (per 10 grams), MCX Silver closed at Rs 66,916 (per kg), and Copper MCX closed at Rs 689.90 (per kg). Sensex and Nifty 50 closed at 49,591.32 and 14,834.85 points. Leading foreign currencies' exchange rates, on the closing day were: \$: Rs 74.73, British Pound: Rs 102.44, Euro: Rs 88.93, Singapore \$: Rs 55.69, Swiss Franc: Rs 80.84, Australian \$: Rs 56.97, Saudi Riyal: Rs 19.93, New Zealand Dollar: Rs 52.55, Kuwaiti Dinar: Rs 247.59, Omani Rial: Rs 194.16, UAE Dirham: Rs 20.35, Japanese Yen: Rs 0.68 and Hong Kong Dollar: Rs 9.61.

In local markets, due to the traditional marriage season demand standard gold (24 carats) appreciated consecutively for the second week by Rs 770 and closed at Rs 47,350 (per 10 grams). Ornamental gold too, followed the suit and was quoted in the range of Rs 43,300 - 43,400 on the closing day. Silver (0.999) also appreciated by Rs 1,900 and closed at Rs 71,600 (per kg).

Market course hinges on macro data

Coronavirus infections, Q4 results, international crude prices, other global cues will also weigh

CHERUKURI KUTUMBA RAO

Despite the RBI's dovish monetary policy, worried by the rising Covid cases and increased restrictions in key States like Maharashtra and Delhi; the equity markets remained choppy and settled almost on a flat note during the week ended. The Sensex fell 438.51 points to close the week at 49,591.32, while the Nifty declined 32.50 points to 14,834.85. However, the broader markets outperformed benchmark indices and the BSE Midcap index was up 1.2 per cent and the BSE Smallcap index gained 2.49 per cent.

With FIIs remaining on sidelines, DIIs were seen lending support at lower levels. The RBI kept the benchmark repurchase rate unchanged at 4 per cent and maintained an accommodative policy stance to support growth. Reading between the lines, observers conclude that the RBI stance is more dovish than expected with the governor reinforcing the central bank's commitment "to remain accommodative to support and nurture the recovery as long as necessary". IMF projected GSDP to grow at an impressive rate of 12.5 per cent this year.

Macroeconomic data points such as IIP for February and CPI inflation for March will be released on Monday, while WPI inflation for March will be announced on Wednesday. Balance of trade data for March and foreign exchange reserves for the week ended April 9 will be released on Thursday and Friday respectively. Kick-starting the Q4 results season, mostly IT and some BFSI companies will come out with their Q4 numbers in the week ahead. TCS, Infosys, Wipro, Mindtree, HDFC Bank and ICICI Lombard General Insurance are among those that will release their numbers in the next six days. Near term direction of the

market will be dictated by news flow on coronavirus infections, outcome of assembly elections, Q4 numbers, macro-economic data, international crude oil prices and global cues like changes in bond yields.

Heard on the street

Stock valuations have never been so stretched at the beginning of an economic cycle. Savers need to plan for lower future returns. The good news for investors is that the economic rebound from Covid-19 is looking like a fact. The bad news is that financial assets have never been so expensive at the start of a recovery. Stock markets have shaken off concerns about rising bond yields and are setting new highs. Analysts usually compare share prices to the earnings companies generate, which is what investors ultimately have a claim on.

The problem with an 'everything rally' is that, yes, everything is now expensive. Among stocks, even many pandemic-stricken cyclical industries such as entertainment (PVR and others), airlines (Indigo & others) aren't cheap anymore. And with interest rates at record lows and economic growth accelerating, bonds are looking stretched too. Nor is there a dip to buy in real estate.

Home prices have risen during the pandemic and are close to all-time highs in several cities like Hyderabad. Savers shouldn't panic yet. Waiting for a bubble to burst based on high valuations has led to terrible investment decisions in recent decades.

Futures & options / sector watch

Technology stocks will be in limelight in the coming week as IT majors - TCS

MARKET Khabrein



(on Monday), Infosys (on Wednesday), and Wipro (Thursday) will declare their quarterly earnings. Industry sources predict strong numbers given the increasing demand for digitisation (amid the Covid-19 crisis), large deal wins, and a healthy order pipeline. It would be advisable to explicitly judge management commentary to understand growth outlook for specific stocks. On the back of the risk of the second wave of coronavirus, Pharma stocks were back in demand. Stay invested and adds on declines Divi's Labs, Dr Reddy, Sun Pharma and Glenmark. Even after a 'good' accommodative policy by the RBI, bank stocks corrected sharply amid fear of asset quality concerns due to lockdown restrictions in key States.

If the cases continue to rise and restrictions continue then there could be a further dip in banking stocks which can ultimately weigh on the market performance. Banking stocks will remain on the radar as the market awaits the impact of Supreme Court judgement on banks asset quality and income recognition. The coming week will be a truncated one, with Wednesday being a trad-

ing holiday on account of Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Jayanti.

Stock futures looking good include Aarti Inds, Glenmark, Gujarat Gas, HCL Tech, Sun Pharma, RIL and Wipro. Stock futures looking weak include Bata India, Amaraja, Coal India, APL Ltd, PVR and Jubilant Food.

Stock picks

The KCP Limited is engaged in cement, engineering, power and other businesses. The company's segments include engineering, cement, power, sugar and others. Its general engineering business offers a range products, such as anvils, cylinder for extrusion process and die moulding. Its cement business offers a range of equipment, which includes crushers, rotary kiln, support roller with shaft assembly for kiln, horizontal ball mill, and roller press. Its power business offers a range of equipment, including vertical coal pulverizer mills, columns, reactors, boiler furnace, condensers, steam drum, storage tanks, deareator, air pre heaters, steel power and gear boxes, and loading frame. Its sugar business offers a range of equipment, such as shredders, vacuum pans and co-generation boilers.

With captive supply of high grade limestone, the company has a combined annual capacity of 4.3 million tons of the finest quality premium grade cement in India. KCP Heavy Engineering (KCP HE), a division of The KCP Limited offers a world class build to order heavy manufacturing facility, with a fully integrated steel foundry, heavy fabrication, heavy machine shops with assembly facilities. FIVES CAIL-KCP Limited (FC-KCP) is a joint venture between KCP Limited, India & Fives Group of France to provide turnkey sugar plants, co-generation and incinerator of effluent from molasses

based distilleries. The Government of Vietnam invited KCP to set up a sugar factory in Central Vietnam. This led to the formation of KCP Vietnam Industries Limited, as a subsidiary of KCP Limited with an objective to establish a modern sugar factory. The project was executed by FCB-The KCP Limited and the plant was commissioned in early 1999 and commercial production successfully started from January 2002 to manufacture sugar and white sugar. The initial production capacity was 2,500 TCD which was further expanded to 6,000 TCD.

Why we are recommending the company:

- The company's the most preferred brand for building columns, beams, slabs and other concrete construction applications. Supplied large quantities of high quality cement to various large projects like the Nagarjuna Sagar dam, Srisailem dam, Godavari Rail Road bridge and more recently to the Polavaram irrigation project and Sri Kanakadurgamma flyover project in Vijayawada.

- Engineering division is strategically located in the northern suburbs of the southern coastal port city of Chennai, India, with very close proximity (9 km) to the Chennai / Kattupalli / Kamarajar (Ennore) ports for sea transport within India and globally.

- Excellent Q4 results expected. Renewed demand and higher realisation may see cement division report profits of over Rs 175 crore.

Buy between Rs 85-95 for medium term price target of Rs 175-200. In the event of sharp correction in the broader market, stop loss should be at Rs 80. We are looking at a risk reward ratio of 1:8.

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



K Naresh Kumar

How to invest in debt funds post RBI money policy?

Dynamic bond funds with less or no intermediate bonds would play out good for the investors with a moderate risk appetite



is the introduction of Government Bond Acquisition Program, GSAP 1.0 where it has committed open market purchases of government securities. This is seen as the India's QE (Quantitative Easing). The total targeted amount is one lakh crore for the first quarter of this financial year, slated for an initial purchase of 25,000 crore by mid-April. This move brings in a huge relief to the market which is worried about how the planned fund raising by the government pans out, also dissolves the volatility associated with it. The recent spike in global bond yields was seen as a spanner for the government debt raise and RBI has solved this problem with GSAP.

The US Federal Reserve (Fed) has continued their stance of monetary policy and actions especially on the priority towards growth &

employment over inflationary fears. It considers the impact could be transitory and would be a mere blip even as the administration has doubled up the fiscal response with a \$2 trillion infrastructure bill. As the details emerged that this additional spend is being mostly financed from an increase in the taxes and thus little change in the government balance sheet is reflecting a bit about the strategy of prudence in fiscal spend.

With this backdrop along with the unknown second wave virus trajectory makes the RBI's move very rational and practical allowing a gradual transition to normalcy. The G-sec volatility is flattened and allows for a smooth borrowing program at relatively stable rates. As investors in debt funds, investors may not need to alter their current allocation if done within their goals and timelines. The cen-

tral bank has cut 135 bps (basis points) over five instances during last year and the current policy decision gives a sense that the rate cut cycle is buried. There would be a gradual hike in the rates though an actual change is a few months away from now.

Of course, the evolution from here depends largely on how the inflation would translate in near future which again is dependent upon the vaccine drive, re-opening and infection rates. This dichotomy is making the choice a bit complex for the investors. Though the current actions help the yields in the long part of the curve, over allocating in longer duration may have adverse impact as the realization of carry will not be rendered completely. A barbell strategy where both the short and long-term bonds are involved would make more sense to make most out of the evolving opportunity. Dynamic bond funds with less or no intermediate bonds would play out good for the investors with a moderate risk appetite. Conservative investors could stick to the short end of the investments.

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

Market in unpredictable mode

Best strategy is to wait until the decisive breakout happens

THOVITI BRAHMACHARY

The Indian stock market has not moved anywhere during the last week. It closed at an opening level after volatile sessions. The week opened at 14,837.70 and closed almost at the same level of 14,834.85. Compared to last week's close, it lost 32.50 points or 0.21 per cent. The BSE Sensex lost 0.9 per cent. Interestingly, the broader market outperformed during the week. The Midcap-100 and Smallcap-100 indices gained by 1.4 per cent and 3.3 per cent respectively. The out-performance of the Metal index continued with another 6.6 per cent gain. IT index up by 5.3 per cent, and the Pharma advanced by 5 per cent. The Bank Nifty declined by 4.16 per cent, and FinNifty was down by 3.12 per cent. The FIIs have withdrawn Rs 1,536.73 crore in the first five tradings in April, and DIIs bought Rs 1,129.09 crores.

The market is not in a mood to give any kind of clues to the traders. It formed a Doji candle on a weekly chart with an increased daily range. On Monday, it opened in negative territory and fell sharply over 400 points from the day's high. Though it recovered almost 200 points, it ended with a 230 points loss. In the later four days, the index range was mostly limited to this big bar. It tried to cross the previous week's high on Thursday and Friday. As the efforts were futile, the Nifty formed Dragonfly Doji on



Thursday and confirmed the bearish implication on Friday by closing below the Doji close. It also formed a lower high lower low bar on Friday. The Nifty formed two Doji candles in the last five weeks. Within the broader 1000 point range, the last 15 trading session has become more congestive range of 400 points. In these 15 sessions, the Nifty tested 14,880 resistance seven times.

The classical technical analysis says the seventh resistance or support is very rare. So, a close above 14,880 will be a massive bullish breakout. Barring on Thursday, every dip bought into. This is the reason the daily bars have long shadows. It is a buy on the dip market in another way. But, the confirmation to bearish Doji, is not giving the confidence to be bullish biased and go long. The longer the consolidation faster the move after the breakout, as the Nifty is nearest to the resistance, the probability breaking upside generally believed. But, the last two days, it tried hard to close above the resistance. Two failures in a row is not a good sign. In this indecisive, near resistance in the tight range scenario, the best strat-

egy is to wait until the decisive breakout happens. The Nifty is also moving in an upward channel for the last one year. The channel support placed at 14,469, which is the previous week's low. As I mentioned earlier, the current

formation looks like a bullish flag within the upward channel. Last week, it closed near the previous week's high but failed to continue the positive movement. The 20-weekly average and the channel support are at the same place. So, in any study, 14,469 and the 20-weekly average 14,328 are the very critical supports.

The MACD histogram suggests the bearish momentum further increased. At the same time, the ADX and +DMIs are below 25 on weekly and daily charts, which is negative. The ADX, +DMI and -DMI are at a confluence, which is indicating a probable big move on the cards. The RSI is at 63.11 in a neutral zone, and does not show positive divergence even on the daily charts. As the indicators showing mixed outcomes, the Nifty may oscillate within the well-defined range. On the upside, 14,880 and Thursday's high of 14,984 is a strong resistance level. Above this level, the Nifty resumes the upward move and can test 15,165 initially.

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

DERIVATIVES OUTLOOK

DASARI SREENIVASA RAO

The futures and options (F&O) data points to wider trading range for the week ahead as resistance and support levels extended by 500 points each when compared to the previous week. Highest Call OI build-up is at 15,500 strike after the trading hours on Friday (April 9) from 15,000 points in the previous week. During the period, the highest Put OI moved to 13,500 strike from 14,000 points.

The highest Call OI is at 15,500 strike, which also recorded maximum addition of Call OI, followed by 15,000/15,200/15,300/15,100/14,900 strikes. Other strikes 15,000/15,100/15,300/15,400 wit-

Options data points to wider trading range

nessed reasonable build-up of Call OI.

Coming to Put side, the 13,500 strike recorded highest Put OI followed by 14,500/14,600/14,000/13,700 strikes witnessed active addition of Put OI. Barring 15,000 and 14,900 strikes, remaining strikes added Put OI.

Dhirender Singh Bisht, senior research analyst (derivatives) at SMC Global Securities Ltd, said: "From derivatives front, Call writers were seen adding hefty Open Interest at 15,500 strike and this should act as a strong hurdle for Nifty going forward. On downside, 14,700 and 14,500 levels are likely to provide support to the index."

According to ICICI Direct.com, the NSE Nifty registered above

average additions in ATM Straddle of (14,800 and 14,900 Call & Put) for the coming week. The combined premium for this straddle is near 250 whereas IVs remained subdued. Nifty may consolidate in coming trading sessions with strong support for the week at 14,500 and resistance at 15,000 points.

"Indian markets once again struggled to hold on to its gains as Nifty and Bank Nifty both the indices ended the week on a negative note. Nifty indices ended the week below the 14,850 mark, while leading banking names like HDFC Bank and Axis Bank dragged the Bank Nifty below 32,500 level," added Bisht.

The domestic stock market recorded a volatile trading last

F&O TRADING			
Product	Contracts	Turnover (Rs/cr)	Premium (Rs/cr)
Index Futures	3,09,002	29,035.19	--
Stock Futures	6,91,968	68,189.31	--
Index Options	2,08,32,601	19,72,246.69	14,237.14
Stock Options	15,95,237	1,64,995.93	3,743.06
F&O Total	2,34,28,808	22,34,467.12	17,980.20

week as Nifty attempted to overcome the hurdle of 14,950-15,000 points.

The banking stocks suffered the most on the Dalal Street. Despite a loss of 0.20 per cent in the Nifty, other indices saw significant movement. Mid-cap and small-cap indices moved up 1.5 per cent and 3.2 per cent respectively.

For the week ended April 9,

2021, BSE Sensex closed at 49,591.32 points, a net fall of 438.51 points or 0.87 per cent, as against 50,029.83 points. NSE Nifty too declined marginally by 32.05 points or 0.21 per cent and closed at 14,834.85 points from 14,867.35 points.

"The Implied Volatility (IV) of Calls closed at 19.37 per cent, while that for Put options, it closed at 20.58 per cent. The Nifty

VIX for the week closed at 30.31 per cent. Put-Call ratio of OI for the week closed at 1.79 and it indicates more Put writing than Calls," added Bisht.

In the F&O space, FII action was primarily seen in the stock futures and index options segment. FIIs were net sellers in the index futures segment worth Rs 35 crore and they sold to the tune of Rs2,176 crore in the stock futures segment, while FIIs bought index options worth Rs11,422 crore.

Bank Nifty

The NSE's banking index Bank Nifty closed at 32,448.05 points, a net loss of 1,409.95 points or 4.16 per cent from 33,858 points.

Bisht forecasts: "From technical front, Bank Nifty is trading near its crucial support level of 32,150 points, which is placed at its 100-day exponential moving average. In coming sessions, if Bank Nifty

manages to give any decisive move below that then further decline in prices can be observed. Till then we can expect range bound trade in markets with sector-specific moves."

As per the ICICI Direct.com data, IVs remained muted near the 20 per cent mark. Bank Nifty was witnessing closure in OI, which moved to an almost two-year high for the April series and it's indicating a positive for Bank Nifty.

Derivatives analysts predict stock-specific trading for next week, while short covering may pick up pace once the Bank Nifty manages to close above 33,000 points, which has a sizable Call base.

The current price ratio of the Bank Nifty-Nifty declined marginally to 2.28 levels. No major outperformance will take place in the Bank Nifty during the week. It is most likely to consolidate in a broader range.

Indian Premier League

Big-hitters galore: RR, Punjab Kings aim for winning start



MUMBAI

ANOTHER battle of big-hitters is on the cards when KL Rahul's Punjab Kings take on the Sanju Samson-led Rajasthan Royals, two line-ups dotted with expansive stroke-makers and in pursuit of a winning start to their IPL campaigns here on Monday.

Rajasthan will be banking on their swashbuckling all-rounder Ben Stokes. Stokes will be keen to get some runs under his belt and so will be the likes of Englishman Jos Buttler and newly-appointed skipper Samson, who is a mine-field of talent.

The Royals could opt to open with the highly-rated Yashasvi Jaiswal and Buttler. While Samson, who would be itching to prove a point, and Stokes would then form strong middle-order. If the four fire on all cylinders, they can pummel any attack into submission and Punjab would be no exception on the Wankhede track, which is usually batting-friendly.

Royals also have an several other options at their disposal, including all-rounders Shivam Dube, Shreyas Gopal, Rahul Tewatia, Riyan Parag and Liam Livingstone. Gopal, Tewatia and Parag, all bowl leg-spin, so it would be interesting to see whether the Royals opt to go in with two leg-spinners. Tewatia and Dube have the ability to whack the ball outside the park and look to be certain in the playing XI.

With star pacer Jofra Archer

SQUADS

Rajasthan Royals: Sanju Samson (c & wk), Jos Buttler (wk), Ben Stokes, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Manan Vohra, Anuj Rawat, Riyan Parag, David Miller, Rahul Tewatia, Mahipal Lomror, Shreyas Gopal, Mayank Markande, Andrew Tye, Jaydev Unadkat, Kartik Tyagi, Shivam Dube, Chris Morris, Mustafizur Rahman, Chetan Sakariya, KC Cariappa, Liam Livingstone, Kuldeep Yadav, Akash Singh.

Punjab Kings: KL Rahul (c & wk), Mayank Agarwal, Chris Gayle, Mandeep Singh, Prabhsimran Singh, Nicholas Pooran (wk), Sarfaraz Khan, Deepak Hooda, Murugan Ashwin, Ravi Bishnoi, Harpreet Brar, Mohammed Shami, Arshdeep Singh, Ishan Porel, Darshan Nalkande, Chris Jordan, Dawid Malan, Jhye Richardson, Shahrulkh Khan, Riley Meredith, Moises Henriques, Jale Saxena, Utkarsh Singh, Fabian Allen, Saurabh Kumar.

missing due to injury, the pace attack will have to be led by Rajasthan's newest recruit -- South African all-rounder Chris Morris, who will be eager to justify his huge price tag of Rs 16.25 crore. RR will have to get their combination right as only four foreigners can make the playing XI.

So, it will be interesting to see whether Royals opt for left-arm pacer Mustafizur Rahman or go in with either Jaydev Unadkat, Kartik Tyagi or Chetan Sakariya.

Unadkat, with his experience, might get the nod.

On the other hand, Punjab boast of some hard-hitters like Rahul (670 runs in 2020 season), Mayank Agarwal



Sanju Samson and Kumar Sangakkara

(424 runs) and Chris Gayle.

Rahul and Agarwal formed a lethal opening combination in 2020 and would continue to open. They also have the likes of Englishman Dawid Malan, one of the finest T20 batsmen currently, hard-hitting Tamil Nadu batsman M Shahrulkh Khan, and West Indian Nicholas Pooran.

For them too, it would be all about getting the combination right. Shahrulkh could get the nod ahead of others like Deepak Hooda and Sarfaraz Khan, and could play the role of a finisher. The bowling attack will be led by Mohammed Shami, who was superb in the last edition.

Their pacer line-up has been bolstered by the signing of Australian speedsters Jhye Richardson and Riley Meredith, who had a sensational Big Bash campaign, and also includes Chris Jordan.

It remains to be seen who takes the new ball with Shami. With their spin attack a concern, Murugan Ashwin and Ravi Bishnoi will have to play their roles well to contain a devastating Rajasthan line-up. (PTI)

Sanju and I will both agree that it's a big blow for us. Jofra is a very vital part of our make-up and not to have him is unfortunately the reality of it. We have to work around it and plan contingencies. Most of the wickets are

good for batting. So, you have to be quite skilful. We have Kartik Tyagi, who did pretty well last season in patches and this year we have new additions (pacer) Kuldeep Yadav (Jr) and Chetan Sakariya

—Kumar Sangakkara, RR's Director of Cricket

'Dhoni inspiration behind emergence of keeper-captains'

NEW DELHI

RAJASTHAN Royals' English recruit Jos Buttler believes the legendary Mahendra Singh Dhoni is the inspiration behind emergence of wicketkeeper-captains in the world's biggest T20 league, the IPL.

In the ongoing IPL, four out of eight franchises will be captained by wicket-keepers and Buttler feels the credit should go to Dhoni for setting the trend. Besides Dhoni, who has been Chennai Super Kings' skipper since the inaugural edition in 2008, three more glovesmen — KL Rahul (Punjab Kings), Sanju Samson (RR) and Rishabh Pant (DC) will lead their sides in the ongoing IPL.

"I am sure MSD (Dhoni) has something to do with the sixth sense and breeding of wicketkeepers who can captain. He obviously has been a fantastic captain and there are lots of players who want to follow his footsteps," Buttler told PTI Bhasha in an exclusive interview.

Buttler himself a wicketkeeper, feels stumpers enjoy an advantage as captains as they get a 360 degree view of the proceedings. "I think a wicketkeeper has a brilliant view of the game. That can add to your decision making as you can see first-hand how the wicket is behaving and the way bowlers are bowling," he said.

The 30-year-old Englishman expects Samson to deliver the goods as skipper and termed compatriot Ben Stokes as the X-factor for Rajasthan. (PTI)



GOA

'AFC Champions League will help Indian players mature faster'

FORMER senior national football team captain Bruno Coutinho has said that India hosting the AFC Champions League in Goa from April 14 is not just a big honour for the nation but the experience will help the country's players "mature faster".

Bruno, who represented India in 44 matches, and has also been the recipient of the AIFF's (All India Football Federation) Player-of-the-Year Award in 1996, said: "It is an honour for the country, the players and the team to compete at this level. The experience will help them mature faster. I consider them lucky as they are getting to play at this level. Such moments call for giving 200 per cent on the pitch."

"There is nothing to fear. You have to go with a winning mentality, which is most important," Coutinho added.

It is for the first time that India are hosting the AFC Champions League action and will be represented by Indian Super League (ISL) 2019-20 champions FC Goa, who will compete alongside Iran's Persepolis, Qatar's Al-Rayyan and the Abu

Dhabi-based club Al-Wahda in the group stages of the most prestigious club competition in Asia.

"The tournament coming to India for the first time and an Indian team -- FC Goa -- playing for the first time -- is great. I would like to wish good luck to them. All the best and go for the kill!" Coutinho said.

In a career spanning a decade-and-a-half, Coutinho led the country in several international tournaments, namely the President's Cup in Dhaka in 1989 and the SAF Games in 1995 and 1996.

Talking about the level of the teams that will compete in the Group E, Bruno stressed the importance of being "well-prepared" and mentioned that the players will be "highly motivated to put their best foot forward".

"The clubs that are coming here have been playing at this level from long. For them, this is not the first time in the competition. They have very good players, and it is not easy playing against teams from West Asian countries. In contrast, we are the debutants. So, we need to be meticulous." (ANS)

PCB launches its own Hall of Fame, 6 legends to be inducted initially

KARACHI

THE Pakistan Cricket Board will be launching its own 'Hall of Fame' to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of their stalwarts from yester-years.

As part of the initial launch, six members from the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame -- Hanif Mohammad, Imran Khan, Javed Miandad, Wasim Akram, Waqar Younis and Zaheer Abbas -- will be inducted into the PCB 'Hall of Fame'.

There will be three more inductions each year from 2021 with the inductees to be chosen by an independent panel and announced on October 16, the day when the country made its

Test debut in 1952.

According to PCB guidelines, cricketers who have retired from international cricket for at least five years will be eligible for induction into the PCB Hall of Fame.

"Since earning the Test status, Pakistan has produced world-renowned cricketers who have not only put Pakistan on the world map but have left their mark on world cricket," PCB chief Ehsan Mani said. "...it is appropriate that these six extraordinary performers be the founding inductees as they continue to inspire the next generation of superstars," he added.

The decision was taken during a virtual meeting of PCB's Board of Governors on Saturday. (PTI)

CSK skipper Dhoni fined ₹12 lakh for slow over-rate

MUMBAI

CHENNAI Super Kings (CSK) skipper, Mahendra Singh Dhoni, was on Sunday fined Rs 12 lakh for slow over-rate in the match against Delhi Capitals (DC), which the three-time Indian Premier League (IPL) champions lost by seven wickets at the Wankhede Stadium here on Saturday.

A media advisory issued by the IPL on Sunday said, "Chennai Super Kings captain MS Dhoni has been fined after his team maintained a slow over-rate during their VIVO Indian Premier League (IPL) 2021 match against Delhi Capitals at the Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai on April 10.

"As it was his team's first offence of the season under the IPL's Code of Conduct relating to minimum over-rate offences, Mr Dhoni was fined Rs 12 lakh."

In a match, which was termed a clash between two skippers at opposite ends of the captaincy spectrum -- it was Rishabh Pant's maiden outing as DC skipper, while Dhoni has been CSK skipper for ages, besides captaining India in all three formats of the game -- the Delhi franchise made CSK pay for their lapses on the field and poor bowling, winning their opening contest with eight balls to spare.



"A lot depended on how much dew you would get. That's the reason we wanted to get as much runs as possible. You have to look ahead, especially when you have dew, you have to get extra runs. A 7.30 pm start means opposition will have less amount of dew and we have to score those 15-20 runs extra. After that you need to get early wickets also. Well, if we consistently keep getting dew, 200 is something all teams will have in mind," said Dhoni after the match

Chasing 188 for 7, DC's Prithvi Shaw (72 off 38 balls) and Shikhar Dhawan (85 off 54 balls) put on a 138-run opening-wicket partnership in 13.3 overs that saw their side make a mockery of the challenging 189-run target set by CSK. (ANS)

Real seal thrilling Clasico win; Barca coach fumes

BARCELONA: Real Madrid held on to earn a narrow 2-1 El Clasico win over Barcelona on Sunday and go top of the La Liga charts on Saturday. Karim Benzema broke the deadlock in the 13th minute with his ninth goal in seven league games, finishing Lucas Vazquez's cross with a back heel nudge.

Madrid doubled the lead before the half-hour mark when Toni Kroos' freekick deflected against Sergino Dest's back and flew past Jordi Alba on the line, reports DPA.

Barcelona fought back in the second half in torrential rain, with Oscar Mingueza pulling one back from close range. Substitute Ilaix Moriba almost equalised in stoppage time but hit the crossbar.

Atletico Madrid travel to face Real Betis later on Sunday and could go back top with a point. They are currently level with Real on 66, while Barcelona are third on 65.

Barcelona complained of two penalty decisions they were not given, with Ferland Mendy clashing with Ousmane Dembele and later Martin Braithwaite in the area. "I think everyone saw the game, if you're a Barcelona fan you're furious, very unhappy about the two refereeing decisions," said an angry Barcelona coach Ronald Koeman.

"In the first half we were not good in attack or defence, in the second we improved. It's a very clear penalty, once more we have to shut up and accept it."

The Barcelona coach later walked out of a pitch-side interview after a reporter did not answer his question about whether his team should have been given a penalty. Neither incident was clear cut, and Madrid could have put the game to bed in the first half when Fede Valverde hit the post with the score already at 2-0.

Fighting India defeat Argentina

BUENOS AIRES

HARMANPREET Singh and goalkeeping stalwart PR Sreejesh emerged India's heroes as the visitors defeated Olympic champions Argentina 3-2 in a thrilling shoot-out after the teams were locked 2-2 at the end of regulation time, in the FIH Pro League match on Sunday.

A penalty corner earned by skipper Manpreet Singh with 25 seconds left for the final hooter changed the course of the tense contest against the hosts, who looked set for victory with a 2-1 lead. Harmanpreet scored his second goal in the 60th minute with a superb drag-kick to fetch India a 2-2 equaliser, pushing the contest into a penalty shoot-out.

FIH PRO LEAGUE



India's Lalit Upadhyay, Rupinder Pal Singh and Dipreet Singh were on tar-

get in the shoot-out, while goalkeeping stalwart Sreejesh came up with some breath-taking saves to fetch India a bonus point.

The second match of the FIH Pro League will be played on Monday.

Earlier, India drew the first blood after a barren first quarter with a penalty corner earned in the 21st minute. India vice-captain Harmanpreet made a clinical interception and struck a fierce shot to give India the much-needed lead.

"I think the biggest takeaway from this match is our fighting spirit. We didn't lose hope until the last minute and we fought back really hard to earn this result," said Harmanpreet. (ANS)

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