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Delhi logs 255 new cases

NEW DELHI: The national capital recorded 255 new COVID-19 cases and 23 fatalities, the lowest since April 7, on Sunday, even as the Delhi government announced to lift curbs on restaurants and weekly markets partially from June 14.The positivity rate stood at 0.35 per cent, according to the latest health bulletin. Delhi has recorded 14,31,139 COVID-19 cases and 24,823 fatalities due to the disease since it began ravaging countries last year. Over 14 lakh patients have recovered from the infection, the bulletin said. Delhi had reported 213 cases, the lowest since March 9, on Saturday; 238 cases on Friday, 305 cases on Thursday and 337 cases on Wednesday.

Newlyweds to plant tree

KAUSHAMBHI: In a new initiative for eco-conservation, the residents of a village in Kaushambhi district have made it mandatory for every newly wedded couple to plant a tree.The residents of Amni Lokipur village of Mooratganj development block have resolved that every newly married couple of the village would be allowed to enter their house only after planting the sapling of a fruit bearing tree and pledging to nurture it as their 'first child'. Swatantra Singh, former gram pradhan of the village, said, "The initiative has already started with the first couple who got married after the recent decision, has planted a sapling.

Delhi records 35.2 deg C

NEW DELHI: The national capital recorded a maximum temperature of 35.2 degrees Celsius on Sunday, four notches below the season's average, the IMD said. The minimum temp was also recorded four notches below the season's average at 23.8 degrees Celsius, they said. The maximum and minimum temp is likely to settle around 34 and 25 degrees Celsius on Monday, the weatherman said, adding that there is also a possibility of thunderstorm accompanied with rain. The relative humidity was recorded 71 at per cent. The air quality index (AQI) in the national capital was 89 at 6.05 pm, real-time data issued by the Central Pollution Control Board showed. An AQI between zero and 50 is considered 'good', 51 and 100 'satisfactory', 101 and 200 'moderate', 201 and 300 'poor', 301 and 400 'very poor', and 401 and 500 'severe'.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL

DELHI...



MUMBAI...



WATER CRISIS WORSENS IN DELHI'S CHANAKYAPURI

NEW DELHI

AS the water crisis in the National Capital worsens, locals in the Vivekanand Camp in the Chanakyapuri area were seen climbing atop the water tank instead of waiting in queues.

In a video shared by news agency ANI, a large group of women was seen waiting on the footpath with water vessels. When the water tanker of New Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) reached the Vivekanand Camp, a few of them climbed atop the water tanker with complete disregard for their safety. They

then put in pipes to fill their buckets.

The desperate situation, caused due to the water crisis, led to overcrowding around the water tanker. People were also spotted without masks and violating social distancing guidelines amidst the Coronavirus pandemic.

The water crisis in the area has led to people lining up in long queues waiting for water tankers. The situation is similar in Sanjay Camp of the Chanakyapuri area. The residents are forced to wait for over 5 hours for water, while only 4-5 water tankers come for 15,000 people. Locals also said that while the tankers

come twice a day, there is no fixed time for the same. Therefore, they are forced to wait for hours for the tankers.

Locals said that if they stay indoors, they won't know when the tanker comes and even a five minutes delay will mean they will not get water. To avoid that, they keep waiting outside till the tankers come.

Amidst the rising temperature in the National Capital, people are left rendered by the Delhi administration. Meanwhile, a war-of-words have started between the BJP and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) over the water crisis.



DELHI UNLOCKS FROM TODAY

Malls, markets to open daily, says Kejriwal

NEW DELHI

RESTAURANTS with 50 per cent capacity, weekly markets and religious places will reopen in Delhi from June 14, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced on Sunday, saying the COVID-19 situation has significantly come under control in the city. Salons, beauty parlours and barber shops closed since the imposition of lockdown on April 19, will also reopen from Monday, officials said.

"All activities, except certain prohibited ones, will be allowed from 5 am on Monday. There are also certain restricted or partly allowed activities announced last week that will continue," Kejriwal said in an online briefing.

He said markets, malls and market complexes allowed to reopen on odd even basis, will now open on all days, from 10 am to 8 pm. Only one weekly market per municipal zone per day will be allowed, he said. "We will watch the relaxation allowed to reopen markets and restaurants during the next week. If Covid cases do not increase, we will continue the relaxation, but if cases increase, we will have to bring



back the restrictions. "I, therefore, appeal all market associations and others to prevent crowding and ensure social distancing and other precautions," the chief minister said.

Schools, colleges, educational and coaching institutes, cinema halls, multiplexes, theatres, gyms, spas, yoga institutes, swimming pools, auditoriums, banquet halls, amusement and water parks, and public parks and gardens, will continue to be closed till 5 am on June 21, according to the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) order issued on Sunday. All

social, political, sports, entertainment, academic, cultural/religious, festival-related and other gatherings and congregations, stadia, sports complexes barring those used for training or any national or international event, business to business exhibitions, are also prohibited.

The religious places in the city will also be allowed to reopen from Monday, but visitors will not be allowed, Kejriwal said. He said with declining number of coronavirus cases, the concern now is to bring back Delhi's economy on track and preparing on a war footing for an anticipated third wave of the infection.

"The restaurants are allowed up to 50 per cent of the seating capacity in the city and their owners will be responsible for strict adherence to the prescribed standard operating procedure and government guidelines, including those for COVID appropriate behaviour," the DDMA order stated. "All markets, market complexes, malls and restaurants (up to 50 percent seating capacity) will be allowed to function on trial basis for one week from 5 am on June 14 to 5 am on June 21," it said

Friends for 7 yrs; two girls elope, marry each other in Gurugram

GURUGRAM

Two girls from Haryana's Gurugram and Jhajjar district here got married at a temple located in Sohna, the police said.

According to the police, a 20-year-old girl, resident of Pataudi area in Gurugram had become friend with a 19-year-old girl from Jhajjar while studying in a Jhajjar school. The two of them have been friends for 7 years. The two girls with their mutual consent got married according to Hindu rituals in a temple located in Sohna on Friday. The girl from Gurugram's Pataudi area became wife, while the girl from Jhajjar became husband. The

girls had first expressed their desire to marry with their family members, but they asked them to forget each other, telling them that it is against the society. Thereafter, the girl from Pataudi went missing ten days ago following which her father filed a missing complaint with the police. When the police traced the girl on Saturday, she disclosed that she got married to her friend. "Both the girls were produced before a local court in Pataudi on Saturday. They informed the court that they are adults and have 'solemnized' the marriage in a temple. However, the family members of the girls tried to persuade them but they didn't pay heed and decided to live together.



Protestors wearing giant heads portraying G7 leaders pose after a demonstration on a beach outside the G7 meeting in St. Ives in England on Sunday

No clarity on vax procurement, say private hospitals

NEW DELHI

SEVERAL private hospitals across the country said they have no clarity on procuring COVID-19 vaccines under the new policy announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and that it has led to the vaccination being put on hold at their centres.

The hospitals have sought a proper mechanism and a single-window system to be put in place for procurement of vaccine doses.

They also claimed that they had approached the vaccine manufacturers -- Bharat Biotech and Serum Institute of India (SII) -- and also state governments, but to no avail.

Meanwhile, in a recent communication to the Union health ministry, Prakash Kumar Singh, director, Government and Regulatory Affairs at SII, is learnt to have written, "As per your direction, we are not accepting any further orders/payment from any private hospital in the country. We await your further direction with regard to roadmap for future supplies to private hospitals." Elaborating the problems faced by private hospitals, S C L Gupta, medical director, Batra Hospital said, "The problem is that there is no clarity on how we will be procuring the vaccines.



When we ask the state government officials, they say wait till June 21 stating that the policy is not yet clear.

"The central government also has asked us to wait. We have approached the companies too, but they are also not clear on the methodology of procurement," he said. In the whole process, Gupta said, vaccination of people is getting delayed. "With fear of a possible third wave hitting India, we want to vaccinate as many people as possible. Also several people and many of our healthcare workers who have taken the first dose are waiting for their second dose," he said. P K Bhardwaj, Chief Executive Director and Head of De-

partment of Surgery, Saroj Hospital also said that nothing has been clearly spelt about procurement by private hospitals and how much vaccines will be given to each private hospital.

The vaccinations at most of the private hospitals are on hold and the public, especially those patients who need to get the second doses, are at the receiving end. "The government should soon come out with transparent and clear guidelines so as to avoid any further delay in this crucial exercise of inoculating people against the deadly virus," Bhardwaj, who is also secretary of the Delhi Voluntary Hospital Forum, said.

DELHI SNATCHING CASE SOLVED WITHIN 4 HOURS

NEW DELHI: CCTV footage turned out to be a key input in solving a crime, with Delhi Police cracking a snatching matter within a record four hours -- from registration of the case to arrest of the criminals. Scrutinising CCTV footage and the inputs developed with local intelligence led the police to solve the daylight snatching case that occurred outside Ghitori Metro Station on Friday. Sandeep Lamba, whose mobile phone was taken, is a research scholar, pursuing his PhD in Mechanical Engineering from IIT Delhi. He was also engaged in developing an app related to women safety issues. Police accelerated their inquiry after the complainant informed them that robbed mobile phone contained valuable and important data related to studies which was crucial for his career as well as the project in pipeline, related to women safety. "During the course of investigation, CCTV cameras installed at nearby place were checked. Local informants were contacted and briefed about the incident. After rigorous efforts, the team finally zeroed down upon accused persons," said the police.

India natural ally of G7: PM Modi

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said India is a natural ally for the G7 countries in defending the shared values from a host of threats stemming from authoritarianism, terrorism and violent extremism, disinformation and economic coercion.

In a virtual address at a session on 'open societies and open economies' at the G7 summit, the prime minister highlighted India's civilisational commitment to democracy, freedom of thought and liberty, according to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). Modi also highlighted the revolutionary impact of digital technologies on social inclusion and empowerment in India through application such as Aadhaar, Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) and JAM (Jan Dhan-Aadhaar- Mobile) trinity. In his remarks, the prime minister underscored the vulnerabilities inherent in open so-

cieties and called on tech companies and social media platforms to ensure a safe cyber environment for their users, additional secretary (economic relations) in the MEA P Harish said at a press conference.

"The prime minister's views were appreciated by other leaders in the gathering," he said. Harish said the G7 leaders underlined their commitment to a free, open and a rules-based Indo-Pacific and resolved to collaborate with partners in the region. India's participation at the G7 sessions reflected understanding within the bloc that resolution to "the biggest global crisis of our time" is not possible without India's involvement and support, he said, in a reference to the coronavirus pandemic. He said India will remain deeply engaged with the G7 and guest partners on all major issues, including health governance, access to vaccines and climate action.

Roll back fuel price hike, control food prices: Left

NEW DELHI

THE Left parties in a joint statement on Sunday demanded the rollback of hike in petroleum products and urged the government to control prices of essential commodities and drugs.

The joint statement has been signed by Sitaram Yechury, General Secretary, Communist Party of India (Marxist); D Raja, General Secretary, Communist Party of India; Debabrata Biswas, General Secretary, All India Forward Bloc; Manoj Bhat-tacharya, General Secretary, Revolutionary Socialist Party and Dipankar Bhattacharya, General Secretary, Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist)Liberation.

Alleging that the government, instead of helping people to combat the ravages of the Covid health catastrophe, hiked the prices of petroleum products by at least 21 times after the announce-



ment of results of the recent assembly elections on May 2, the parties said that this is leading to a "cascading inflationary spiral with the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) rising to an 11-year high." "The

prices of food articles have risen by nearly 5 per cent in April. Primary commodities saw a rise of 10.16 per cent and manufactured products have risen by 9.01 per cent.

By the time these commodities reach the retail markets, the consumers are charged much more. "This is happening while the economy is witnessing a deep recession, galloping unemployment, collapsing purchasing power and rising levels of hunger. Clearly, unscrupulous black-marketing and hoarding is taking place under state patronage. The Modi government must strictly crack-down on such black-marketing especially of essential drugs, vital for people's survival," the statement said. The parties demanded that the government must immediately give direct cash transfers of Rs 7,500 per month for six months to all families not falling in the income tax paying bracket.

Womenia

Fill your wardrobe with capsule collection

In this pandemic situation, it's important to fill your wardrobe with capsule collection. A capsule collection comprises a number of essential items which can be interchangeably worn with each other which means, multiple outfits can be styled using the same items. There are several perks of fostering a capsule wardrobe; firstly, these basic items never go out of style; secondly, they limit your consumption and prevent you from indulging in fast fashion; thirdly, an epic capsule wardrobe can save you a lot of money, which you'd otherwise spend on buying multiple attires. To sum it up, a capsule collection is all about mixing and matching limited pairs of clothes to assemble a new look every time.

Baggy Trousers

Everyone's in love with baggy trousers and we understand their popularity given how comfortable they are. From fashion influencers to the young girl next door, everyone is sporting baggy pants these days. My advice would be to add at least two pairs of baggy trousers preferably one in denim and the other in black, white or beige to your wardrobe. It's really convenient to pair these up with practically anything between crop tops and kurtis.

Co-ord Sets

Co-ord sets are the fashion world's newest obsession. They consist of two parts which usually include a crop top and the bottom can be anything from trousers to skirts of different lengths and shorts. They come as a complete ensemble but the two parts of co-ord sets can also be separated and paired with other alternatives, creating a new ensemble in the process.

Crop Tops

The go-to solution for hot



summer days, crop tops are that one piece of clothing that fits in perfectly with practically everything. You can pair them with jeans, skirts or shorts as you like and they'll blend right in. From off-shoulders and spaghetti to comfortable baggy tees - crop tops come in a broad range of styles to pick from.

Scarf Tops

For people who like to experiment, scarf tops can be a unique addition, perking up an otherwise casual collection. One can opt for pre-stitched scarf tops or



go for the unstitched ones which offer a greater scope to play around. Scarf tops look great with baggy trousers and ankle length skirts.

Cotton kurtis

Cotton kurtis are essential; it's always wise to stock up one or two because the need to use them will definitely arrive at some point or the other.

Split Skirts

Split skirts can be a refreshing change for days when you're not in the mood for trousers. Ankle



length skirts with knee-high splits, preferably in pastel colors, can be conveniently paired with the previously mentioned crop tops and scarf tops.

Made in monochrome

The world is in love with monochrome. My reason to recommend monochrome, however, is its versatility. Focusing on monochromes maximizes the scope for mixing and matching different pieces of clothing, which is just what we need when planning a capsule collection.

(Pawan Gupta, CEO and Co-Founder at Fashinza)

INDIA is silently behind the craftsmanship you see at many Haute Couture presentations in Paris. In Europe, couture is seen as the pinnacle of fashion, worn by a very select group of women. In India, we have an unrivalled savoir faire of handmade crafts and textiles, so it is not wonder then that international brands look to us for artisanal details.

Couture in India really has its own definition. Indian couture is about weddings and special occasion wear watch any edition of India Couture Week and it is obvious who the designers are catering to brides.

Last year it was this very same wedding driven couture that actually saved many designers. While the Big Fat Wedding had to get skinny thanks to the pandemic, weddings still happened, and brides still wanted that special dress.

"Weddings have kept us in business," says one of India's most celebrated couturiers, Manish Malhotra. But it was a new wedding, one where the ceremony became the main occasion and not the sangeet or the reception. If you see Malhotra's current couture collection, Nooraniyat, you will notice the intricate use of silk thread embroidery gives his designs an old-world feel, though the collection is made for a young woman.

"Before I think we were the label you came to for your sangeet or reception, now we have become the label you turn to for your ceremony," states the designer. Indian Couture he feels will now center around craftsmanship. "The story behind your collection needs to be strong. The young fashion buyer is asking questions about how the outfit is made, the legacy of the crafts and the designs interventions. This will change how Indian designers approach couture," he says.

Couture is gaining a new meaning, and it is no longer just for special occasions and weddings, be-

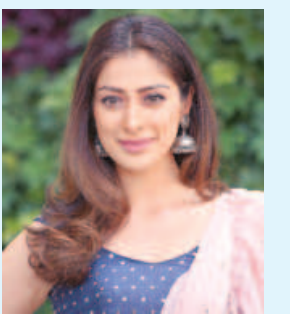
lieves the designer. Couture craft centric details will be woven into ready to wear clothes too whether it is separates that use chikankari embroidery or handwoven white khadi shirts. Handmade details lend a special connect to clothing.

Ritu Kumar who can only be described as the Grande Dame of Indian fashion says, "Recent movements like 'vocal for local' and the lack of big weddings will help re-establish the original concept of bespoke clothing and reimagine couture to diversify from bridal wear into becoming a wardrobe staple." India has a long legacy of bespoke garments, and she adds, "We have been making and wearing hand-woven and hand-stitched garments for centuries. Our rich legacy of artisanship and craftsmanship has long lent to bespoke clothing being part of our culture."

Kumar has noted that more and more clients are coming in with saris once worn by their mothers or grandmothers, asking for them to either be restored or for new blouses to be made for them.

"The pandemic, as a whole, has rewritten the fashion rules. People who invest in any garment are more interested in buying sustainable clothes, both in terms of how they are made and how long they will last." It is a new craftsmanship that clients want today- they have become used to wearing comfort clothing, and couture clothing that follows the "no pain no gain" theory of dressing will no longer be accepted by couture clients. "It is about dexterous embroidery and craft over trendy pieces," says Kumar. From Ari to Zari, it is heritage artisanship that will become the focus of couture.

Of course, this second wave has meant there is a lack of confidence about when things will go back to normal, but designers believe that Indian couture is here to stay. How the collections will be presented remains a question mark in India. While Paris Couture



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If your dream only includes u,
it's too small.

From Ari to Zari, craft will define couture in the post pandemic era

SUJATA ASSOMULL



FASHIONISTA

Week will see physical shows, the second lockdown has put the India Couture Week's plans about physical shows on hold. "We are hoping to have an edition in August or September" says Sunil Sethi, President of the Fashion Design Council of India. In March they had thought a physical couture week would be possible, but the second wave has meant ateliers have been shut and there are also safety concerns.

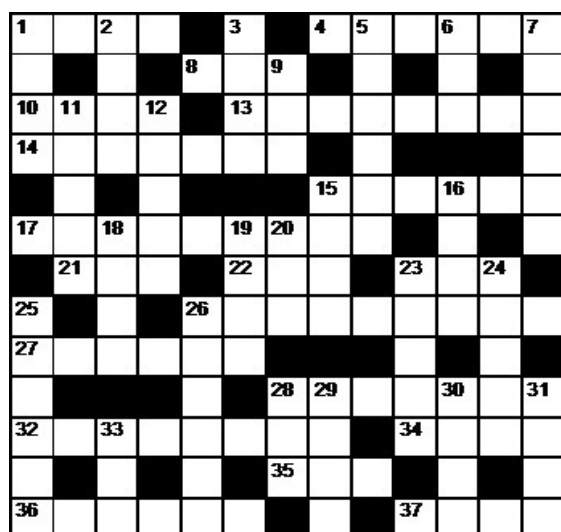
One of the most awaited shows of couture week is Gaurav Gupta, a designer who liked to put on an extravaganza of a show, transitioned to the digital format with a fashion film, "Name is Love". With a strong narrative the show celebrated all Gaurav Gupta's sculptural and architectural trademarks. "My couture collection 2021 is almost ready, and it will be very different," Gupta admits that he is missing the charm of a physical show and says while he does not know what form his presentation will be this year, he is clear that the show must go on.

World Blood Donor Day

The best way to celebrate World Blood Donor Day is to go out and give blood. There's a powerful need for blood of all types, and there's rarely enough of it to go around. Just a single contribution now and then will help save lives, so get on out there and give.

Finding a clinic in your local area is surprisingly easy. Usually, teams of medics will set up donor rooms where you can go to give blood with other volunteers. Before you donate, you'll need to take a quiz to see if you qualify. After that, a nurse will test your blood to ensure that it is safe to withdraw a large quantity. Then, they will place a needle in your arm and remove around a pint. If you can't give blood for whatever reason, that doesn't prevent you from taking part in World Blood Donor Day. There are still plenty of things that you can do. You could, for instance, mark the occasion by updating your social media profile pictures to celebrate the event. Symbols and images can have a massive impact. If you live in an area that requires more blood, you could also go out canvassing on behalf of your local blood donation group. Often something as simple as posting leaflets through the doors of those in the local community can encourage people to come forward.

World Blood Donor Day is, therefore, one of the most important public health events in the calendar. It affirms the hard work of those early blood transfusion pioneers and encourages people to get out and give.



SOLUTION TO JUNE 12

CROSSWORD

Across

- 1 Central part (4)
- 4 Colonial marine hydrozoan (6)
- 8 Out of ____ : unemployed (3)
- 10 Sell or peddle goods (4)
- 13 Atomic research center (8)
- 14 With enthusiasm (7)
- 15 Greek geometer (6)
- 17 Mournful (9)
- 21 Root vegetable (3)
- 22 Expert (3)
- 23 KGB's Cold War foe (3)
- 26 Series of ranks (9)
- 27 Informal (6)
- 28 Sailor (7)
- 32 Emperor (8)
- 34 Central point (4)
- 35 Norse god of war (3)
- 36 Italian sausage (6)
- 37 Diary capacity (4)

Down

- 1 Small bay (4)
- 2 Telephoned (4)
- 3 Stupid person (4)
- 5 A type of sailing vessel (6)
- 6 Cover (3)
- 7 Plan (6)
- 9 Body of water (3)
- 11 Before time (5)
- 12 Fabric for jeans (5)
- 15 At all times (4)
- 16 Secular; a layman (4)
- 18 Types of East Indian shrubs (4)
- 19 Follow (4)
- 20 Frozen water (3)
- 23 It is worn by a king (5)
- 24 In front (5)
- 25 Ranges or extents (6)
- 26 Horse-drawn cab (6)
- 28 Feline family pet (3)
- 29 Welsh resort (4)
- 30 Additional (4)
- 31 Close by (4)
- 33 Indian dish (3)

SUDOKU



SOLUTION TO JUNE 12

NEWS ROUNDUP

Preity Zinta shares her happiness as people roaming on the streets without masks



Bollywood actress Preity Zinta took to social media on Sunday to share glimpses from the US as things start unlocking over there and life starts getting back to normal.

Preity shared a video on Instagram from the US where people can be seen in a weekend mood, enjoying themselves sitting by a roadside cafeteria, while some people roaming on the streets with friends and family (mostly without masks). The actress is also seen without a mask as she shows her smiling face in the video. "It's awesome to see people out and about enjoying each other's company after months of being locked in their homes. Of course it helps that most of the people have been vaccinated! Here's to life getting back to normal & people enjoying the simple things in life," Preity shared along with her video. Commenting on Preity's post, fans showered her with love and said she is looking lovely. A user also pointed out how nobody recognises the Bollywood actress even though she is walking on the street without a mask.

‘Love jihad’, ‘cow terror’ will not work in UP polls: RLD chief

ASIM KAMAL

NEW DELHI: Asserting that the BJP's alleged "apathy" towards protesting farmers will hurt it in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls, RLD chief Jayant Chaudhary on Sunday said artificial issues such as "love jihad" and "cow terror" will not work as issues of development will win in the elections.

As the focus shifts from the West Bengal polls earlier this year to the high-stakes election battle in Uttar Pradesh in 2022, newly-appointed Rashtriya Lok Dal chief Chaudhary asserted that his party will not allow a communally po-

larised campaign to ruin the Hindi heartland state in the run up to the assembly polls. In an interview with PTI, Chaudhary, who took over as RLD chief after his father Chaudhary Ajit Singh's demise last month, said his party and the Samajwadi Party have a good rapport and a strong working relationship.

He said details need to be worked out for a formal alliance for the polls. Asked if a 'Mahagathbandhan' or a grand alliance is needed in UP to take on the BJP and whether the BSP and the Congress would be part of such an alliance, Chaudhary said, for him, issues come first and an understanding of those needs to be

built between all alliance partners.

"Who can be accommodated depends on who is honestly open to working together on the common framework," the 42-year-old leader said. On whether the Congress would play a significant role in the assembly polls despite its poor showing in the panchayat elections, Chaudhary said he would not like to comment on the Congress' plans and chances.

Asked about the speculation over UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's political future as CM and reports about Cabinet reshuffle in the state, Chaudhary said the BJP is just trying to divert attention and create an illusion of dialogue



to manage the disgruntled elements in the party.

"Social engineering doesn't come about by tinkering with one or two leaders at the top. The fact is that BJP's Uttar Pradesh government has been caught in

a caste-based matrix and has not delivered jobs, economic growth, and efficient governance to people," he alleged.

The state government's Covid response has been atrocious and no one can forget the scenes of dead bodies in the Ganga, he added. "Now, after four-and-a-half years to create rumours of change in leadership is a poor attempt to shift focus from failures," Chaudhary said. Talking about the farm laws protests and whether they would be a key issue in the polls, he said farmers will and should be the biggest poll issue in our country, and asserted that as a class they have been denied their rights for far too

long. "The Centre's new laws are prescribing a takeover of the entire market and value chain by the private sector and the withdrawal of the government from procurement and subsequent monopolisation will hurt producer and consumer interests," the RLD chief said.

The "apathy and insensitive" attitude towards the protesting farmers will continue to haunt and hurt the BJP in polls, he claimed. Chaudhary has participated in a number of 'kisan panchayats' in western Uttar Pradesh, where his party has had a significant presence over the years, and campaigned aggressively against the Centre's farm laws.

Sanjay Yadav sworn in as Chief Justice of Alld HC

LUCKNOW

JUSTICE Sanjay Yadav took oath as the Chief Justice of the Allahabad High Court on Sunday.

Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel administered the oath of office and secrecy to Justice Yadav at the Gandhi Hall of the Raj Bhavan here. Justice Yadav would, however, demit the office on June 25 this year when he turns 62. Chief Justices and judges of high courts retire at the age of 62.

According to a Raj Bhavan statement, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Law Minister Brajesh Pathak, UP Chief Secretary RK Tiwari, Additional Chief Secretary to Governor Mahesh Kumar Gupta, family members of the Chief Justice, senior judges of the High Court, Registrar and other senior officials were present during the swearing-in ceremony. Justice Yadav, acting Chief Justice of the Allahabad HC, was appointed as the Chief Justice of the court on June 10, the Union Law Ministry had said.



Last month, the Supreme Court collegium had recommended his name for elevation as the Chief Justice of the Allahabad High Court. Born on June 26, 1959, Justice Yadav had enrolled as an advocate on August 25, 1986. He practised on civil, revenue and constitutional sides in the High Court of Madhya Pradesh at Jabalpur. He also served as the deputy advocate general of Madhya Pradesh. Justice Yadav was elevated as a judge of the High Court of Madhya Pradesh on March 2, 2007 and a permanent judge on January 15, 2010.

Phone tapping issue resurfaces in Raj

JAIPUR

PHONE tapping charges have come back to haunt the Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot led government in Rajasthan, with Congress MLA Ved Prakash Solanki alleging that some legislators have talked about their phones being tapped.

Without naming any MLA who levelled the phone tapping charge, Solanki, a staunch supporter of Congress leader Sachin Pilot, said the legislators also fear of being trapped by various agencies.

"I do not know if my phone is being tapped or not. Some legislators have told me that their phones

are being tapped. I am also not aware if the state government is involved in phone tapping. Many officials told them (legislators) that it seems that there are efforts underway to trap them," Solanki, a legislator from Chaksu assembly constituency, told reporters on Saturday.

"Some of these MLAs have also informed the chief minister of the matter," he said. Solanki said he does not know whether the MLAs have technical knowledge or there is some App through which they come to know that their phones are being tapped. Reacting to the remarks, BJP state president

Satish Poonia charged that the Congress is intimidating its MLAs.

"Today again a Congress MLA is saying that many MLAs say their phones are being tapped and spying is happening. Congress should tell who these MLAs are? The Congress is intimidating its own MLAs," Poonia tweeted.

In a tweet, Deputy Leader of Opposition Rajendra Rathore charged that the state government was once again trying to intimidate public representatives. In July last year, Pilot and 18 Congress legislators had rebelled against chief minister Gehlot. One of the accusations they levelled was about il-



legal phone tapping.

The charges gained ground when some audio clips of telephonic conversations were shared by Gehlot's officer on special duty (OSD) Lokesh Sharma. The audio clips were later handed over to Rajasthan Police's special operations group (SOG) to investigate charges that some legislators were trying to topple an elected government through horse trading. The SOG ultimately closed the case after the Congress high command intervened to resolve the issues between Gehlot and Pilot.

UP BJP works to strengthen its social arithmetic ahead of polls

NEW DELHI

JOINING hands with smaller parties with a political base in different castes was a part of the BJP strategy as it won big in Uttar Pradesh in the 2017 assembly polls and 2019 Lok Sabha polls. The saffron party is again working to stitch up a strong social alliance as it prepares for the state elections slated for early next year. With senior party leader and Union minister Amit Shah reaching out to the leaders of

Apna Dal (S) and Nishad Party, both BJP allies but disaffected over the issue of their representation in the government, and Congress leader Jitin Prasada joining the saffron party, the ruling party seems to be taking measures to get its arithmetic right.

Prasada hails from a noted Brahmin family of the state that had remained in the Congress for three generations, and the BJP believes that the young leader's defection to its ranks will help it contain any dissatisfaction a section of

the politically influential community might have with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath-led government.

While Anupriya Patel of Apna Dal has not spoken on her meeting with Shah, Sanjay Nishad of Nishad Party made it clear that his party wants representation in the state government to "fulfil" the aspirations of the marginalised communities it draws its support from. "Political power is stronger than God's power," he told PTI to emphasise its importance to ad-

dress myriad issues facing different deprived communities. He also reiterated his demand for giving the community of boatmen, who come under various castes and subcastes, benefits under the scheduled castes and not under the category of Other Backward Communities as being given currently in UP. In a message to the BJP, he said the community has in the past supported parties like the BSP, SP and the Congress but stopped voting for them after they did not address their concerns. "We under-

stand the Modi government has been busy with important national issues," he said, referring to Article 370 revocation. "Now we believe our concerns will be addressed," he said.

His son Praveen Kumar Nishad's victory as Samajwadi Party candidate from Adityanath's pocket borough of Gorakhpur had shocked the BJP, which then worked to woo him over to its camp during the 2019 Lok Sabha polls. Patel was a minister in the first Modi government but her party's reported talks with the Con-

gress during the 2019 Lok Sabha elections even as it finally fought as a BJP ally resulted in the Kurmi leader being kept out of its second innings. There have been reports that the BJP may also bring its former ally Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party to its fold again but its leader Om Prakash Rajbhar has ruled out such a possibility. BJP sources said their party has always worked to give due representation to various communities and noted that it has never been averse to tying up with smaller parties.



કપિલ ચિટ્સ થો
પ્રતિ બંધન એવો ષલુવૈનલ

નમ્મુકં મીદ ષલબડેન બંધન ષાલા બલમૈનલ

“કપિલ ચિટ્સ” મી કલલકુ નાકારં.

Will a non-BJP, non-Congress front be possible?

AT national level a political buzz has begun. Speculations are making round that the just concluded elections to West Bengal had shown that if all forces which are opposed to BJP are brought together, the ruling NDA can be easily defeated in 2024. In other words it means that a non BJP, non -Cong alliance will have to be formed.

The beginning of this political churning (how long it will last is difficult to say) on the completion of two years of Narendra Modi's second term gains importance. But then the question is, can such a unity among the parties be brought by the veterans? It appears that veteran politicians like Sharad Pawar are now unable to face the fast changing politicking and have decided to depend on political strategists which has now become a new

business. With no dynamic leadership in the opposition, they are now looking towards paid political strategists.

The recent meeting between NCP chief Sharad Pawar and Prashant Kishore is learnt to have discussed the possibility of forming a non BJP and non Congress front. The meeting, it is said, was of the opinion that if such a front was formed they can target about 400 seats. In other words, the NCP chief is looking at the West Bengal model. If parties like DMK, YSRCP, TRS, Shiv Sena, TMC etc can be brought on one platform and if a regional front could be formed, it would be possible to give a tough fight to BJP is what Pawar and Co feel. If this formula takes concrete shape, the Congress will be left alone and could get further decimated.

The failure of the Centre in prepar-

ing the states to face the second wave of pandemic and the slowdown of economy, the non BJP parties feel could help them in their campaign. But then it is not so easy a task. First and foremost issue is that the front should come into existence by the end of 2021 or early 2022. In India, we have seen how every party keeps bargaining till last minute before joining the alliance and how they start pulling in different directions soon after the alliance comes to power leading to collapse of coalition government.

There is still a long way to go before Pawar's game plan takes a concrete shape. Meanwhile, the country will be witnessing seven Assembly elections next year. Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Goa and Manipur in February-March; Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh in October-December.

ber. In all these places, despite not being able to re-bounce politically, the Congress continues to be the main rival to BJP. All that is required is to work hard and see that the vote percentage of the grand old party increases by about a little over five percent.

The Congress still has a good chance to bounce back if it goes in for early organisational elections and throws up a leader who can enthuse the state units and succeed in putting an end to migration to other parties. Senior Congress leader Kapil Sibal rightly said India needs a resurgent Congress and that would be possible only when early organisational elections take place.

This is necessary for the Congress as by 2023, elections in states like Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Meghalaya, and Nagaland would be held and the Congress can emerge at least as the main opposition. But unfortunately, the party does not seem to be moving in that direction. It has already lost over six years and continues to make strategic mistakes.



Poor vigil to blame for encroachment of forests

B K SINGH

THE Supreme Court of India recently ordered Faridabad Municipal Corporation to clear encroachments in Aravali forest land within six weeks duly demolishing around 10,000 houses built unauthorisedly in Lakkarpur Kori village. The area is in Eco Sensitive Zone important for securing the ecological integrity of the landscape. The onus of compliance is put on Secretary, Forest, Haryana, and commissioner of civic body, Faridabad.

Superintendent of Police, Faridabad, has been directed to provide adequate forces to facilitate corporation official to carry out demolition drive and clear the forest lands from encroachments. The judges found it surprising that the authorities did not demolish unauthorized houses on forest land despite Supreme Court orders passed in February last year and in April this year.

Forest areas closer to cities are prone to encroachment by real estate developers. Forest Department of Delhi is also struggling to keep ridge area and a portion of Aravali in its jurisdiction free from encroachment. Forest lands within and adjoining corporation limits of Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Chennai etc have also been grabbed by real estate developers. Houses have been built and people have been living there for two three decades now. Whenever demolitions and evictions are taken up by the authorities concerned, there is a public outcry and often authorities face law and order problem. In most cases the process is wound up without completing the task. Even if the activists file Public Interest Litigation (PIL) and matter goes to Court, finality is reached in only handful of cases. In the instant case of Faridabad Municipal Corporation, Supreme Court has already ordered for eviction twice. When both orders were not complied, the Court has passed similar order for the third time.

We in Karnataka realized the importance of forest lands near urban centers some two decades ago. The government took up special measures to build walls and chain link fences to protect whatever land has remained un-encroached. Many notified forests in and around Bengaluru had been subjected to encroachments by land mafias in the past. A few of them were evicted subsequently and whatever has come in the possession of Forest Department has been protected by compound walls and chain link fencing. In addition some security men are also engaged for the perambulation of the boundaries and secure the lands. Further this is not one time affair that the structure is constructed on the periphery and the task is complete. It needs annual maintenance and regular monitoring.

Further securing the land is not enough. The areas should be fully covered with trees. The gaps if any must be regenerated by artificial methods. The technique of greening urban areas is known to Forest department. Excavating bigger pits, filling it up with better quality earth if required and then planting the pit with tall seedlings may be necessary to supplement the naturally growing trees in the area.

Urban centers need lung spaces and thus all the forest lands available should be covered with trees. We need oxygen to breathe. The function of trees is to absorb carbon dioxide for its photosynthesis and release oxygen in the atmosphere. The more the trees we have, the more the oxygen would be released into the atmosphere. During the peak of the second wave of the corona pandemic the demand for medical oxygen had gone tenfold. Patients died for lack of oxygen supply. The most common commercial method for preparing oxygen is the separation of air using either a cryogenic distillation process or vacuum swing adsorption process. I saw some newspaper reports wherein the doctor urging the patient to plant more trees after his discharge from hospital. His oxygen saturation had improved and he had fought COVID successfully.

Essentially forest encroachments take place for lack of vigil in the area. Forest codes adopted in each state of the country prescribe for maintaining the boundaries, regular perambulation and taking up legal proceeding against those found defacing the boundaries, damaging the tree growth and occupying the land. Often there are one or more notified enclosures within notified forests. A single notified forest will have the outer boundary and also several inner boundaries demarcating each enclosure inside. In a forested landscape several notified forests do not have villages/ farm lands on all sides of the outer boundaries. Sometimes a Reserved Forest in Western Ghats closer to human settlement has its northern and eastern outer boundaries adjoining farm lands (coinciding with the village boundaries), while the remaining outer boundaries run along some other Reserved Forests or even streams and rivers.

The job of a beat officer, deputy range forest officer and range forest officer (frontline staffs) is to perambulate the outer boundary of the forests adjoining village boundaries and also all the boundaries of the enclosures. In addition, they have also to perambulate inside the forests to ensure that no criminal gang is active in cutting and transporting trees and hunting wild animals. Lot of sincerity and hard work is required on the part of frontline staff of forest departments to prevent any damage to the forests. I do not say that the encroachments take place in the forests only because of the negligence of frontline staffs. Some encroachments in interior areas take place with their connivance as well. Large scale encroachments on forest lands are reflection on the staffs and also on their senior officers. Divisional forest officers should spend time in the forests and ensure that the frontline staff perform their duties sincerely.

Forest Rights Act, 2006 provides for the recognition of rights of all scheduled tribe families occupying forest lands as on 13th of December 2005 and also other traditional forest dwellers in occupation of forest lands for 75 years as on that day. This has become a land grabbing Act. Politicians across the party lines also support the communities for electoral gains and encourage them to clear tree growth in more forest areas, occupy and claim rights. Ministry of Tribal Affairs, nodal agency under the Act has junked the evidences from satellite imageries, which is the only evidence in support of the claim that cannot be forged. Other evidences listed in the Act can be manipulated. The website of nodal agency reveals that the rights over five million hectare forest lands are already recognized in different states. In addition, another five million hectare forest lands are in occupation of the communities in different districts of the country, where rights have been rejected. The rejected cases are ordered by Supreme Court for reverification. Encroachments on forest lands are going on endlessly, resulting in deforestation. Loss of tree cover means loss of ecological services the forests provide and also invitation for climatic catastrophes like floods, droughts, cyclones etc.

(The author is retired Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Karnataka)

IMPOSE BAN ON BITCOIN

THE WAY AHEAD



Dr Bharat Jhunjhunwala

Think of 100 computer professionals sitting in separate cubicles in a hall. They are solving a Sudoku puzzle with 50 rows and 50 columns. One who solves the puzzle first shouts that he has solved it and shares his solution with all the participants. The others check his solution and, if found correct, confirm his "win" and gave him a Bitcoin as a prize. Then all the 100 participants gave their suggestions for the next stage of the Sudoku which would now be made with, say, 70 rows and 70 columns. A master computer mixes up these suggestions and makes a new Sudoku puzzle. The same 100 participants again try to solve this puzzle. Once again, whoever solves the new puzzle is given a Bitcoin by all the other participants. These 100 participants use this Bitcoin to make trade amongst themselves. One participant can sell and another can buy, say, 10 apples for 1 Bitcoin. This trade is possible because both participants recognize the Bitcoin as their own currency. It is like children trading with marbles as a currency. One can sell and another can buy one postage stamp for two marbles, for example.

This crypto currency Bitcoin is only a number that is generated by the master computer. Whoever has the number is the owner of the Bitcoin. This number is encrypted, hence the name crypto currency.

It would be obvious that the acceptability of such a crypto currency, say, Bitcoin would be only among the 100 participants who participated in the competition. Let us say, 200 computer professionals were sitting in another hall nearby and they were solving their own Sudoku puzzles; and they gave their own crypto currency as a prize by the name, say, Twocoin. The 200 professionals sitting in the second hall may not recognize the solution of the Sudoku made by the 100 professionals sitting in the first hall. They may recognize the solution made by the 200 participants sitting with them in the second hall only. In this way, more the numbers of halls, more the number of crypto currencies. If you want, you too

can assemble 100 or 1000 participants in a hall or a computer network and start your own crypto currency. No wonder about 1500 crypto currencies are in existence in the world today. The acceptability of these currencies depends entirely on the number of participants who recognize that currency. Now, if a currency is accepted by sufficiently large numbers of players, then any individual owner is assured that he would be able to sell his Bitcoins and buy, say, a car. In such a situation the banks also recognize these currencies. Bitcoin is the most prominent and perhaps the most widely accepted crypto currency today. Many banks across the world accept these currencies though, thankfully, the Reserve Bank of India has not allowed Indian banks to accept them as valid means of payments.

The original idea behind starting crypto currencies was that the value of the currencies issued by the governments was controlled by their central banks. You may have hard-earned money and deposited Rs one lakh in a bank. But the Government could have increased the inflation and real value of your deposit could be reduced to, say, Rs 90,000. Crypto currency was made to keep the value of one's money outside the control of the government. Indeed it is true that the value of crypto currency is not in the hands of the central banks. However, the computers in which the crypto currencies are made and stored are located in some country and are under the control of that government. Most crypto currency enthusiasts are located in China. Thus, the Chinese Government can, therefore, seize the computers and the value of the currency will evaporate in a few minutes.

The intricacy of the Sudoku puzzles increases with every puzzle that is solved. We may now have a Sudoku puzzle of 2000 lines and 2000 rows. It would not be possible to solve such puzzles manually. Therefore, Bitcoin enthusiasts have established "factories" to solve these puzzles. Large computers are installed in these factories that try to solve the most complicated Sudoku puzzles set by the master computer. They consume huge amounts of electricity in the process. These "businesspersons" make investment in computers and electricity and get returns in the Bitcoins that they win. The manufacture of Bitcoins uses electricity just as the Reserve Bank of India uses paper and ink to print notes. The first problem in crypto currencies, there-



These currencies are harmful for the environment because they consume resources like computers and electricity and do not produce tangible goods that could lead to social welfare. They are harmful for the society because they are leading to increase in crime. Lastly, its value is uncertain and can disappear anytime

fore, is the huge use of electricity—which is a burden on our environment. We are using electricity to solve puzzles that have no tangible use.

The crypto currency is only a number though a very complicated one. Incidents have taken place that an owner's computer crashed and the crypto currency number stored in it was lost forever. The Bitcoin was extinguished and the owner was put to loss as if he lost a diamond on the street. Hackers have also entered the owner's computer and stolen the number and became the owner of the Bitcoin.

Most importantly, today criminals are seeking payments in crypto currencies. Recently the computers of the United States' Colonial Oil Company were hacked. The hackers introduced a malware in the computer that could only be removed by the hackers. The company had to pay 5 million dollars or about Rs 40 crores in ransom to keep its pipelines running. Reportedly, the US Government has recovered one-half of the ransom. It is not clear how the recovery was made.

Be that as it may, in the main, the ransom paid in crypto currency does not leave a visible trail of bank transactions or even the numbers printed on the currency notes that could be tracked by the police. It is believed that crime is increasing across the world because it becomes easier to receive the ransom anonymously in crypto currencies.

These currencies are harmful for the environment because they consume resources like computers and electricity and do not produce tangible goods that could lead to social welfare. They are harmful for the society because they are leading to increase in crime. Lastly, its value is uncertain and can disappear anytime. Therefore, Governments across the world should ban the trade in crypto currencies. If banks do not recognize the currencies, then the owners would not be able to use that money for any useful purpose in the economy and this harmful game will die a natural death.

(The author is former professor of Economics at IIM, Bengaluru)

LETTERS



Cheers to new queen of Roland Garros

World No.33, Barbora Krejickova scripted history by becoming the first Czech woman in 40 years to conquer Roland Garros. In a match of fluctuating fortunes, Barbora outlasted Russian Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova in three sets to claim her maiden Grand Slam title. The Czech fittingly dedicated her victory to her mentor, the former Wimbledon champion Jana Novotna who succumbed to cancer at 49 in 2017. The women's draw was riddled with upsets and injuries to key players, taking away the sheen from the tournament.

N J Ravi Chander, Bengaluru

Tax cut on Covid drugs too little, too late

That the GST council reducing tax rates of scores of Covid related material from twelve percent to five

percent is too little and too late. The taxes on all drugs and material used in Covid treatment, including vaccines could have been reduced to zero, in view of their life saving nature in pandemic. It could have been a noble gesture of the council, had there been a discussion on relentless hike of fuel prices with an attempt to bring them under GST basket. The people do need more relaxations from taxes in their most trying times in history.

Dr D.V.G. Sankararao, Vizianagaram

Clay court king crashed out

NOVAK Djokovic handed 13-time champion Rafael Nadal only his third defeat in 16 years and 108 matches at the French Open to reach his sixth Roland Garros final after an epic showdown which even beat the country's Covid-19 curfew. In their 58th career clash, Djokovic triumphed 3-6, 6-3, 7-6 (7/4), 6-2 and stayed on course to capture a 19th major and become the first man in over 50 years to win all four Slams twice. Djokovic, the 2016 champion in Paris who had also beaten Nadal at the 2015 tournament, will face Stefanos Tsitsipas in what will be his 29th championship match at the Slams. Nadal, 35, remains tied on 20 majors with Roger Federer. Roland Garros is known that predominantly baseline players tend to do well on clay courts. The ball bounces slowly and there are more rallies to win a point. It requires a lot of stamina to play on clay courts. Clay Court King crashed out and it is a different ball game altogether.

Krishnan S. Ramani, Ghaziabad, Up

Allay vaccine fears

THE Centre and States have to be more proactive in allaying the fears of the common man over Covid vaccine by a well coordinated campaign, educating masses about the urgent need to get vaccinated. Care has to be taken to ensure that as the campaign progresses

sufficient stocks of vaccine should also reach the health centers. With relaxation in lockdown, a great rush everyday is seen at grocery stores which do not have adequate ventilation. Suitable advisory should be issued for customer safety. Shopkeepers should be mandated to get inoculated all their staff and ordered to display a sign, 'We are vaccinated'.

Brij B Goyal, Ludhiana

Companies swear by 10 principles

THE top listed public companies across the globe have voluntarily enrolled in the United Nations Global Compact Program that encourages them to adhere to its ten principles including human rights, labor, environmental and anti-corruption; and report their status through the annual Communication of Progress (COP) statement. The public-listed entities are thus mandated to prepare the Annual Reports with details related to its commitment to sustainability, corporate governance, and business environment in order to uphold the business principles and values.

Further, the listed companies should be encouraged to make a commitment to the United Nations Global Compact Program through robust voluntary nomination drives. As a best practice, the voluntary enrolment drive to UN Global Compact Program will have a positive impact on the stakeholders including retail investors and the companies can further ensure complete fairness and transparency. The business entities should now surge ahead to protect the interest of investors by sharing its Communication of Progress (COP) as mandated by UN Global Compact Program through its annual reports. Further, the forum can be utilized to share best practices adopted while adhering to the corporate governance and sustainability framework.

Varun Dambal, Bengalore

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EATALA'S RESIGNATION

ELECTION HEAT IS ON IN HUZURABAD CONSTITUENCY

THIRUNAGARI
VENKARESHWARA SWAMY
KARIMNAGAR

THE resignation of Huzurabad MLA Eatala Rajender to his post on Saturday stirred up political activity in the district as it leads to by-election to the Assembly seat. The district, which was the epicenter of many political upheavals in the past, has once again become the centre for stirring political activity with Rajender's removal from the State Cabinet recently.

Huzurabad Assembly constituency had a special place in the State politics right from the formation of the TRS party and the formation of TRS government. Rajender, who once a staunch supporter of the party chief K Chandrashekar Rao and held key Finance Minister post in the first Cabinet after the formation of the State.

However, after the TRS came to power for the second time, it was alleged that a gap was developed between Rajender and the party leadership and his recent comments like 'we are the owners of pink flag' made his situation even worse in the party.

The swift political development during the past few weeks wherein Rajender was suspended from the State Cabinet following allegations of illegal encroachment of assigned lands, led to speculations over the fate of Rajender's political future.

Rajender, who expressed displeasure at being sacked from the Cabinet without asking for an explanation, said that he will announce his decision about future plan after discussing with his followers and people of the constituency.

It was noteworthy that Rajender resigned from his TRS and legislature membership after arriving in Hyderabad amid speculation that he would join the BJP as he was in touch with the leaders of top BJP leaders.

Now, a big debate was going on among TRS and Opposition parties as to who will fill the



Eatala Rajender



TRS leader Vakulabaranam Krishna Mohan Rao



BJP leader Inugala Peddi Reddy



Congress leader Padi Koushik Reddy

MLA seat after Rajender's resignation.

The TRS has already appointed in-charges of several mandals in the Assembly constituency to isolate Rajender.

Minister T Harish Rao, who was appointed as the in-charge of the constituency, was holding meetings with MPTCs, ZPTCs, sarpanches and ward members from time to time. In addition to that, the constituency TRS cadres were regularly meeting district Minis-

ter Gangula Kamalakar.

TRS sources told The Hans India that State Planning Commission vice-chairman B Vinod Kumar and a senior leader Vakulabharanam Krishna Mohan Rao are trying to contest in the by-election.

There were also rumours that the CM might field someone from late V Rajeshwar Rao's family as he happened to be the brother of Rajya Sabha Member Captain V Lakshmanantha Rao. Meanwhile, dis-

cussions were going on in political circles that Congress leader Padi Koushik Reddy, who upped his ante against his political rival Rajender, might join the TRS to contest for the seat.

In the case of unforeseen developments, former Minister Inugala Peddi Reddy, who is now in BJP, could also enter the election fray from the ruling party. It was said that he was upset over Rajender's alleged entry into BJP.

WHAT IF THE THIRD WAVE TARGETS CHILDREN?

ADEPU MAHENDER
WARANGAL

MGMH is the only resort for kids

NOT withstanding the contrasting theories surrounding the third wave of Covid-19 whether it may or may not affect children, there was an imperative need for the hospitals to focus on human resources, drug requirements and infrastructure in dealing with the pandemic.

The Hans India analysed the readiness of the paediatric ward in the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Hospital (MGMH), the Covid-19 designated facility, and other children care centres.

It is an undeniable fact that Covid-19's second wave exposed the State's underprepared health infrastructure as the hospitals ran short of ventilators, medicines, lab technicians, especially oxygen. It led to the death of a large number of people across the country. According to the epidemiologists, the third wave is likely to start from September-October. Against this backdrop, there was a need for the healthcare authorities to prepare a man-

ual for preparation, prevention and planning for the Covid-19 third wave that is likely to impact the children.

The MGMH's Paediatric Department is the only resort for the child healthcare in the erstwhile Warangal district. It's difficult to find paediatricians in the State-run hospitals here. As far as the infrastructure is concerned, the MGMH needs to ramp it up considerably, or else, the authorities need to run around like how it struggled in the second wave when they witnessed a sudden spurt in Covid-19 cases.

Speaking to The Hans India, Dr S Satish, paediatrician attached to Sri Krishna Children's Hospital in Hanamkonda, said, "It's very unlikely that children alone bear the brunt of Covid-19 third wave. Barring a very few, majority of children, who contracted coronavirus, had recovered without the need for hospitalisation. We will definitely have a problem to deal with if the third wave re-

ally targets children. Apart from the State-run MGMH, there are just four to five private paediatric centres in the city that have facilities to treat the children. The primary and community health centres may have come in handy in treating the adults infected with the virus, but it's altogether different to handle the children."

MGMH Superintendent V Chandrasekhar said, "We have been mapping out an action plan in case the third wave catches up with the children. We have earmarked 100 beds exclusively for the children, in addition to the existing 180 beds in the paediatric ward. The number may go up based on requirement." Referring to the equipment, he said that they have 23 paediatric ventilators. The MGMH has three professors, three associate professors and six assistant professors in the paediatric department. Based on need, more medical officers will be inducted, Dr Chandrasekhar said.



MGMH Paediatric Department in Warangal

Veerabrahmendra Peetham imbroglio will be solved: Minister

- Appointment of the head of the Peetham to be made following the Endowment rules and traditions
- Assistant Commissioner appointed as a fit person to look after the day-to-day affairs of the Peetham
- Vellampalli Srinivas appeals to people not to make any controversial comments on the Peetham
- The govt will resolve the issue after taking suggestions from all people concerned, he says

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

THE confusion over the appointment of head of Veerabrahmendra Peetham would be cleared as per the Endowment rules and traditions, said Minister for Endowments Vellampalli Srinivas.

Addressing the media here on Sunday, the Minister said that it is the responsibility of everyone to protect the honour of the Peetham in Kadapa district. Anyway, the government would go ahead as per the Endowment rules and the traditions of the Peetham.

He announced appointment



Endowments Minister Vellampalli Srinivas addressing the media in Vijayawada on Sunday

of assistant commissioner Sankar as fit person to collect the details of the confusion and toe manage day-to-day affairs of the Peetham.

Referring to the imbroglio, the Minister appealed to one and all not to make any controversial comments on the Peetham. "The government would take the decision in order not to cause injustice to anyone," he added.

Referring to the history of Peetham, Vellampalli said that Veerabrahmendra Swamy attained Jeeva Samadhi in 1693 and till today the Peetham was

held by his eleven successors. It has been contended that the last Peethadhipati wrote the will before his demise. Since he had two wives, the children of both the wives are vying for succeeding the peetham. There is no consensus on the succession.

As per the Endowment Act, the details and the copy of the will should be submitted to the Dharmika Parishad within 90 days after the demise of the Peethadhipati. So far, neither the department nor the Dharmika Parishad received any communication in this respect.

The Minister said that there

are 128 recognised Mathams and Peethams in the State and the Peethadhipati would be appointed as per the decision of the majority members of the Peetham or Matham. Hence, anybody could forward their suggestions and advices to the Endowments department.

He said that the problem would be solved in due course after considering the suggestions of all.

A regional joint commissioner would be entrusted with the responsibility of consulting the heads of all Hindu associations to take a final decision.

Death of 2 black fungus patients kicks up a row at SVIMS

HANS NEWS SERVICE
TIRUPATI

THE death of two black fungus patients at SVIMS Sri Padmavathi State Covid hospital on Sunday has kicked up a controversy with attendants of one of the patients protested alleging the negligence of hospital staff.

Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Health Alla Kali Krishna Srinivas alias Nani has reacted to the incident and talked to the DM&HO Dr U Srihari and hospital superintendent Dr Ram.

The Minister directed them to provide better treatment to Covid and black fungus patients. He asked the RDO V Kanaka Narasa Reddy to talk to the patient's relatives and pacify them. Both the DM&HO and superintendent have told the Minister that all the patients were being taken care of properly. Alla Nani has asked Dr Ram to focus on providing bet-

- Relatives of one of the deceased allege negligence of Covid hospital staff caused the patient's death
- Another black fungus patient committed suicide reportedly unable to bear the pain following a surgery at the hospital
- Health Minister Alla Nani instructs the hospital staff to ensure better treatment to Covid and black fungus patients
- He also tells officials to see that good food is provided to patients

ter food to the Covid patients and sanitation at the hospital.

It was learnt that a patient Vinod from Valmikipuram in the district was admitted to the hospital on May 29 as he tested pos-

itive for coronavirus. He was given treatment on a ventilator due to severe lung problems. As his oxygen saturation fell to around 36, the efforts of doctors went in vain and he died in the early hours of Sunday.

His relatives have protested alleging that the hospital was not having required nursing staff and there was negligence everywhere.

Meanwhile, another patient Jayamma, a resident of Bankers Colony in Nellore, has reportedly committed suicide in the same hospital. She was admitted in the State Covid hospital with symptoms of black fungus and was operated on June 10.

Tirupati RDO has enquired about the incident and said that unable to bear the pain at the operated area she committed suicide at a bathroom in the hospital. The dead body was shifted to Ruia hospital for autopsy.

AMARAVATI

THE total Covid-19 recoveries in Andhra Pradesh crossed the 17 lakh mark on Sunday as 12,492 patients got cured in 24 hours, even as the State reported 6,770 fresh cases of the infection.

Also, 58 people succumbed to coronavirus in the State in 24 hours ending 9 am on Sunday, the latest bulletin said. The total positives now rose to 18,09,844, recoveries to 17,12,267 and

AP logs 6,770 new cases, 58 deaths

Toll rises to 11,940

deaths 11,940.

The number of active cases came down to 85,637, the bulletin said. East Godavari district reported 1,199, Chittoor 968, West Godavari 765 and Prakasam 530

new cases in a day. The remaining 9 districts added less than 500 each. Chittoor reported 12 fresh Covid-19 fatalities, East Godavari and West Godavari seven each, Srikakulam six, Anantapur and Visakhapatnam four each, Kadapa, Krishna, Prakasam and Vizianagaram three each, Guntur, Kurnool and SPS Nellore two each in a day. Anantapur joined five other districts in the State on Sunday, aggregating a Covid-19 toll of more than 1,000 so far.

YSRCP govt's policies lead AP into bankruptcy: BJP

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

THE BJP leadership which met here on Sunday with the State president Somu Veeraj in the chair came down heavily on the policies

of the State government which resulted in the bankruptcy of the government treasury.

BJP AP in-charge P Muralidharan, national general secretary Dagubati Purandeswari, senior leader

Sunil Deodhar, national secretary Satya Kumar, former State president Kanna Lakshminarayana, state general secretaries PVN Madhav, Vishnuvardhan Reddy, Suryanarayana Raju, Lokula Gandhi and

others participated in the meeting.

After the meeting, MLC and state general secretary PVN Madhav briefed the media on the proceedings of the meeting.

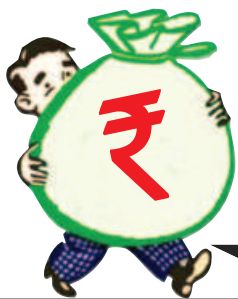
Madhav said that the meeting

discussed in length the political situation in the State and the anti-people policies of the State government. The meeting has decided to make the BJP leaders and workers to participate in the vaccination

programme. It has also been decided to observe Yoga Day on June 21 along with some other programmes. He said that the BJP executive meeting would be conducted virtually on June 28.

Madhav said that the meeting discussed the problems faced by the farmers and they extended wholehearted support to the farmers and decided to launch agitations for them.

“Wide diversification is only required when investors don't understand what they are doing.”
— Warren Buffett



HANS INVEST

Stocks.MFs.Bonds.Commodities



Trading in 7Seas to resume from today



HYDERABAD: Trading in 7SEAS Entertainment Ltd shares on BSE will resume from June 14 onwards as suspension in trading has been revoked. Trading in the securities of the company will be resumed in "XT" group, in which no speculative trading is allowed and delivery of shares and payment of consideration amount are mandatory.

"Revocation of suspension of trading in the equity shares of 7SEAS has been done by BSE vide their letter dated June 7, 2021. The trading in the securities of the company will be resumed from June 14, 2021," says 7SEAS in a release. 7SEAS Entertainment focuses on gaming and animation industry.

No trading in DHFL shares from Monday

NEW DELHI: The BSE and NSE have decided to suspend trading in the shares of Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Ltd (DHFL) from Monday. The development follows the approval of the resolution plan of Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Ltd to acquire the bankrupt company.

Delisting of the shares has been done as part of the resolution plan of the Piramal Enterprises' subsidiary. "In pursuance of Regulation 3.1.2 of the National Stock Exchange (Capital Market) Trading Regulations Part A, and for reasons mentioned above it is hereby notified that the following security will be suspended from trading w.e.f. June 14, 2021 (i.e. closing hours of trading on June 11, 2021)," said an NSE circular.

Easing lockdowns will improve sentiment

Mkts will be getting busy this week as four IPOs - are lined up, looking to raise a total of ₹9,132 crore from share sales

CHERUKURI KUTUMBA RAO

Sustained by receding corona cases, easing lockdown restrictions in the country, renewed buying from FIIs and positive global cues; markets endured their winning streak over fourth consecutive week.

The BSE Sensex touched new all-time high on Friday, rising 374.71 points to 52,474.76, while Nifty gained 129.10 points to close at 15,799.35, during the week. The broader markets relatively outperformed with the BSE midcap and smallcap indices moving up by 2 and 3.5 per cent respectively. 77 per cent of the stocks in which retail investors hiked stake as at end-March 2021 are from the mid- and small-cap space.

The GST Council slashed the levy on several goods used for treatment of Covid-19 - ranging from key medicines and oxygen to hand sanitizers, pulse oximeters and ambulances - while leav-

ing the rate on vaccines unchanged at five per cent. The new rates will be applicable for a limited period - until September. IIP growth technically jumped 134 per cent year-on-year in April, mainly due to the base effect. According to National Statistical Office (NSO) data, the index of industrial production surged to 126.6 in April 2021 from 54.0 in the same month last year, when the nationwide lockdown had brought production to halt at most units.

CPI and WPI inflation for the month of May will be released on Monday, while Balance of Trade data for May will be announced on Tuesday. US FOMC meeting is a big event for global markets in the week ahead. Although the Fed is not expected to take any action, tweaks in interest rate forecasts are likely. It is pertinent to observe that

MARKET Khabrein



the yield on the benchmark 10-year treasury note closed below 1.5 per cent, its lowest level in more than three months, dragged down by tepid economic data and high demand from in-

vestors both in the US and elsewhere.

The primary market will be getting busy next week as four IPOs (initial public offerings) - Shyam Metals, Sona Comstar, Dodla Dairy and KIMS hospitals - are lined up in the coming week, looking to raise a total of ₹9,132 crore from share sales. Observers expect some outflow of money from secondary market to primary market to capitalize on possible listing gains.

F&O / SECTOR WATCH

Mirroring the 'exuberance' in the cash market, derivative segment witnessed brisk trading. Amidst bouts of selling, bulls managed to sustain the momentum in the indices. On the options front, maximum Call open interest was seen at 16,000, 15,800 and 16,200 strikes, while the maximum Put open interest

was seen at 15,000 strike, followed by 15,700 and 15,800 strikes. Tug of war was seen among bulls and bears at 15,800 strike as both call and put writers were seen adding hefty open interest on both the sides.

The Implied Volatility (IV) of calls closed at 13.36 per cent while that for put options closed at 14.31 per cent. The Nifty VIX for the week closed at 15.00 per cent. Low levels also suggest some caution in the market, which may result in extended consolidation in the index. PCR OI for the week closed at 1.68. Option data indicated that the Nifty could see an immediate trading range of 15,500 to 16,000 levels in coming days.

Intraday volumes have dried up, either due to peak margin requirements or lack of retail participants' confidence at the current market levels. More and more stock-specific moves warrant very efficient risk management by the market players. Put trailing stop-losses, as vigilant protection of profits at current and higher levels. Metal companies are likely to witness better earnings and capacity utilisation levels in the coming quarters of FY22 mainly on account of buoyant steel prices.

Adani group is expected to raise \$500 million through a private placement of shares in Adani Airports Holdings before an eventual initial public offering and is targeting a valuation of Rs 25,500-29,200 crore (\$3.5-4 billion) for the business.

Stock futures looking good are GMR Infra, Jindal Steel, REC, TCS, L&T Technology, UBL and Zee Entertainment. Stock futures looking weak are Amaraja, CUB, Granules, Escorts, Exide Inds and Petronet.

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

■ Just Dial Limited is a local search engine company.

The company is engaged in providing search and related services. It is also engaged in other information service activities. The company offers its services across various platforms, such as voice, web, mobile internet and mobile applications. It provides search plus transact services across various categories and platforms, and JD Omni services for its customers. It operates in India and outside India.

Why we are recommending
1. First mover advantage in

Indian local search market. Strong Brand Recognition with 129.1 million unique quarterly visitors* in Q4 FY21 (132.6 million in Q3 FY21)

2. Digitisation of economy after corona pandemic is big positive for companies like Just Dial.
3. Probable takeover candidate. Big players like Tata, RIL and others reportedly showing good interest in the company.

Buy between Rs975-985 for price target of Rs2000 in 12 to 18 months' time frame. Since the stock had good run up in recent times,

STOCK PICKS

stock loss should be slightly deep at Rs850.

■ VA Tech Wabag Limited is a company engaged in water treatment field. The company's principal activities include design, supply, installation, construction and operational management of drinking water, wastewater treatment, industrial water treatment and desalination plants. The company's segments include India and Rest of World. The company has four

clusters: India, Europe, Middle East & Africa (MEA), and Latin America (LATAM). The India cluster provides end-to-end water solutions for drinking water and wastewater plants, both in the municipal and industrial sectors. The European cluster caters to small and mid-sized projects.

Why we are recommending

1. World's Top 50 Private water operators WABAG ranked 4th globally by GWI for ensuring safe and clean drinking water and sanitation.
2. Offering spanning

across municipal drinking water, municipal sewage, industrial water, industrial effluents, desalination and recycle.

3. Technology focused company - owns more than 90 IP rights.

4. Significant debt reduction across the Group • Gross debt reduction of 33 per cent in FY 21 • Turned around from net debt to net cash position in FY 21. Buy between Rs 285-295 for price target of Rs500 in 9 to 12 months. Keep stop loss below Rs250.



K Naresh Kumar

The last one year we've witnessed virtual shutdown of our lives for more than a month, withstood the worst health scare in over a century and then fighting back to normalcy. During this phase education, entertainment, work and the way we live overall have drastically transformed. We've stitched our lives around the raging waves of the pandemic and began to adjust to it. There's a large scale of employment loss, income shocks and livelihood among many households across the country.

The Indian economy has registered its first negative growth in decades and impacting the govt. revenues. The stock market, however, after the initial sudden crash in last March is on a constant rise notching up new highs every quarter since. The burning question of late has been on why the stock markets are so disjointed from the real economy. This has puzzled many investors and others alike on how the markets continued their flight even as the rest of the public is in a plight.

First, we need to understand that the economic indicators are lagging (as they're announced post the happening) while stock markets could be considered as leading indicators (as they discount future possibilities). On that count, while the economy is under shock, the stock markets

Why mkts rising despite falling GDP?

The market-economy disconnect has puzzled many investors and others alike on how the markets continued their flight even as the rest of the public is in a plight



are pricing-in recovery and potential higher growth from here on. This might still not answer entirely the behavior of the markets. But, are the stock indices an appropriate representation of the Indian economy?

If we look at the composition of NIFTY 500 the broader benchmark versus the Indian sector composition to GDP, there's a vast difference. Financial Services as a sector which occupies a lion's share at close to a third in the stock market benchmark contributes only a mere 6 per cent to the GDP. Construction which forms about 2 per cent of the stocks provides about 7 per cent in real GDP.

While taking advantage of the lower interest rates and easy liquidity conditions, quality corporate on their part got their act together. In pursuit of profitability, they managed to reduce costs, turn more productive and deleveraged their balance sheets. These actions not only ensured their survivability but also increased their

earnings furthering their prosperity which called for rerating in their stock prices.

As the economy slowly opened, the demand slowly progressed enabling capacity utilizations. The levers of improved productivity, increased margins and capacity utilizations in place, the pace of recovery was swift and quick. The quality businesses now sat on a vantage to capture the larger opportunity vacated by the informal sector (the very factors that were boon the formal economy turned bane to the informal one) making the big companies to grow bigger. Many of the listed companies thus became the beneficiaries of this largesse of disproportionate market share gains.

The unsynchronized re-opening of the economy also created supply chain issues creating scarcity in the form of goods and even transportation of them. These clogs at various points of the value chain have spiked the inflation (which was benign for

a long while) helped post better earnings by the companies.

More importantly, the depressed interest rates also drove investors hunting for better yields to diversify into stock markets. The risk premia between the high yield debt and sovereigns have shrunk with reduced real returns in safer assets. As the near-term interest rates have turned negative or zero, investors veered to higher yields started to allocate a bit towards equity and other riskier assets, triggering an asset reflation benefiting stock markets.

The current stock market valuations have embedded continued congenial monetary regime and lower future rates while the extraordinary liquidity conditions have only supplemented the mania. In summary, though the stock markets are not an exact mirror of the prevailing economic conditions, the current rally in the markets were abetted by some fundamental changes adopted by the corporate while the rest is fueled by the actions taken to alleviate gloomy situation. On the question of how long this would continue, one must remember that the future returns are a function of current prices and liquidity. As the excesses turn worse into inflationary pressure and the underlying (assumed) conditions change the whole cycle could reverse very rapidly.

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

Low VIX indicates red flag on bullish bias

THOVITI BRAHMACHARY

For the fourth consecutive week, the domestic market was buoyant and continued its upward journey. This is the first time in this calendar that the indices up for four weeks in a row. The benchmark index scaled a new high and also registered a new high close during the last week.

The NSE Nifty traded in 268.65 points range and finally settled at 15,799.35 with 129.1 points or a 0.8 per cent gain. The BSE Sensex up by 0.7 per cent. The out-performance of the broader market continuing. The Nifty midcap-100 and smallcap-100 indices up by 2.9 per cent each. As we expected, last week, the Nifty IT and pharma hit the new lifetime high with 4.5 per cent and 2.6 per cent gains. The media index also advanced by 3.5 per cent. On the other hand, the Bank Nifty declined by 0.69 per cent, and the FinNifty down by 0.5 per cent. During the last nine trading sessions, the FIIs bought Rs47,88.03 crores, and the DIIs sold Rs1,805.27 crores worth of shares. Overall, market breadth is positive during the week.

Technically speaking, the Nifty formed a perfect Doji candle on Friday. Several such bearish failed to get the confirmation in recent history. This time better not to predict the direction, but cautiously follow the trend. An indecisive candle with a declining momentum at the new lifetime high is



not a strongly bullish sign. The volume trend also decelerated for the past four weeks. In fact, the volumes are declining since the beginning of this year. But the Nifty gained 11.45 per cent since the April 22 low.

It looks like the market overstretched a bit technically. It also retraced exactly 127.6 per cent of the previous fall. It has also met the 50 per cent of the cup pattern breakout target. Currently, the Nifty is trading 2.47 per cent above the 20DMA and 15.76 per cent above the 50DMA. The distance from these short-term averages is also important to gauge the market stretch. Earlier, when the index moved over 20 per cent to the 50DMA, it pulled down near the moving average. The current bar structure on daily and weekly time frames shows the overstretched condition and exhaustion. However, there is no significant bearish signal, except overbought condition, there are several concerns on the market direction. The VIX lowest level is the first concern on the market direction. As mentioned earlier, the index and VIX has an inverse relationship. The Low VIX levels indicates a red flag on the bullish bias.

During the last week, the Nifty witnessed some sharp declines of over 100 to 200 points in just 10 to 15 minutes, indicating low VIX. Last week, the VIX declined by 11.53 per cent and below 15. The low VIX will lead to a sharp decline. At the same time, the momentum is clearly decelerating. The histogram is declining for the last nine trading sessions when the Nifty is moving higher. There is a negative divergence visible on RSI on a weekly chart. There is a divergence with Bank Nifty too. The Nifty closed at a new lifetime high, but the Bank Nifty still seven per cent below its lifetime high.

Technically, the Nifty needs to close below 15,660 points to get a bearish confirmation. Even it closes below 15,750 also give an early signal of a reversal. Keep a cautiously optimistic approach to the market, as long as these levels are not broken. Maintaining a trailing stop loss and be vigilant on the sharp moves. It is better to reduce the position size as a risk management practice.

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

DERIVATIVES OUTLOOK

DASARI SREENIVASA RAO

Based on the options data, the Resistance level remained at 16,000 strike for a consecutive second week, while support level declined by 300 points to 15,000 strike. The 16,000 strike, which also recorded maximum addition of Call OI, has highest Call OI followed by 16,200/ 15,800/ 16,300/ 16,100 strikes, while 15,900/ 15,800/ 16,200/ 16,500 strikes witnessed reasonable build-up of Call OI.

Coming to Put side, the 15,000 strike, which has the highest build-up of Put OI, witnessed the highest base of Put OI followed by 15,300/ 15,700/ 15,800/ 15,500 strikes. Other strikes 15,700/ 15,800/ 15,500/ 15,400 strikes recorded

Call and Put writers adding hefty open interest on both sides; volatility index VIX slips below 15 level

moderate build-up of Put OI. Dhirender Singh Bisht, senior research analyst (derivatives) at SMC Global Securities Ltd, said: "From derivatives front, a tug of war was seen among bulls and bears at 15,800 strike as both Call and Put writers were seen adding hefty Open Interest on both the sides."

Analysts predict that index heavyweights will play a crucial role in continuance of the upward move. Banking stocks remained in range-bound mode for the past two weeks, while technology stocks took the lead during the last week. Several market heavyweights are

trading near their highest Call bases, further consolidation is expected. Derivatives analysts advise investors to keep a stop loss near 15,600 level to play the ongoing momentum.

According to ICICI Direct.com, the highest option concentration is at 15,800 Call and 15,700 Put strikes with more than 30 lakh shares each and a combined premium of Rs150. The current OI is significantly lower compared to the last few weeks as volatility has declined significantly and risk aversion is visible among option writers. Hence, positive bias can continue

F&O TRADING			
Product	Contracts	Turnover (Rs/cr)	Premium (Rs/cr)
Index Futures	2,02,279	20,265.19	--
Stock Futures	8,18,919	67,850.18	--
Index Options	1,98,53,644	19,85,490.36	10,504.03
Stock Options	29,69,750	2,49,811.95	4,956.51
F&O Total	2,38,44,592	23,23,417.68	15,460.54

NSE / As on June 11, 2021

with stop loss near 15,550 strike.

Bisht adds: "Nifty indices scaled to its all-time highs in the week gone by and ended with a positive impression for the fourth consecutive week. Nifty rallied towards 15,800 level as the rally was supported by IT, metal and pharma counters along with some buying momentum seen in mid-caps as well. For the week ended June 11, 2021, BSE Sensex closed at 52,474.76 points, a further recovery

of 374.71 points or 0.72 per cent, from 52,100.05 points. NSE Nifty too rebounded by 129.10 points or 0.82 per cent to 15,799.35 points from 15,670.25 points.

Bisht forecasts: "From technical point of view, the 35,500 is an immediate hurdle for Bank Nifty above, which we could witness follow up buying in the banking counter which could move Nifty towards 16,000 levels as well in upcoming sessions. For the coming

week, we expect bias likely to remain in favour of bulls with Nifty getting major support at 15600-15500 zone."

The volatility index VIX eased further to below 15 level, lowest level since February 2020. With the upcoming FOMC meet, a round of upsides in the volatility index can't be ruled out. Such low levels also suggest some caution in the market, which may result in extended consolidation in the index.

"The Implied Volatility of Calls closed at 13.36 per cent, while that for Put options closed at 14.31 per cent. The Nifty VIX for the week closed at 15 per cent. PCR of OI for the week closed at 1.68," remarked Bisht. FII activity was significantly lower in the F&O space. FIIs were net sellers in the index

futures segment worth Rs574 crore, sold Rs502-cr stock futures and index options to the tune of Rs2,592 crore.

Bank Nifty

NSE's banking index Bank Nifty declined by 244.25 points or 0.69 per cent to 35,047.40 points from 35,291.65 points. "Banking stocks remained laggard along with Consumption stocks. Bank Nifty could not manage to match up the rally as the index closed the week with minor losses," said Bisht.

From an options perspective, the banking index continued to witness significant writing at 35,500 and 36,000 Call strikes for the weekly as well as monthly settlement suggesting limited upsides in the short-term.

‘India’s percentage of passes, accuracy better than squad for 2018 WC Qualifiers’



DOHA

DELVING into the minute technical details, Indian football team assistant coach Shashank Mishra says the current side has enjoyed more ball possession and made more accurate passes than the squad for the 2018 World Cup Qualifiers. India are already out of reckoning for a 2022 FIFA World Cup berth but are still in with a chance of advancing to the next round of 2023 AFC Asian Cup Qualifiers.

Venkatesh, who also led the senior national team in his playing days, says current squad has improved on many fronts. “A direct comparison with the first 7 matches of previous World Cup qualifiers -- the FIFA World Cup Russia 2018 qualifiers which kicked off in 2015 shows us that the average ball possession of the current squad has increased by 10.2% -- going up from previous 39.8 % to 50%,” he was quoted as saying by the official AIFF website. “During the previous qualifiers, the number of passes per match was 338 in comparison to 450 in the new set-up. The current passing accuracy is 80% in comparison to 74% previously -- an increase of 6 percent. “The accuracy of the long passes also narrates a positive story -- currently it is at 71% in comparison to it being 56% previously,” Venkatesh added.

India broke a long winless streak with a convincing 2-0 win over Bangladesh in their previous outing of the joint World Cup and Asian Cup Qualifiers here. The lack of enough favourable results notwithstanding, Venkatesh feels the team has evolved a lot over the years and changed its outlook. “It has evolved a lot. There’s always a pathway for evolution. “Looking at the international calendar, there are three stages of the preparatory process -- unofficial friendly matches, international friendlies, and then the official qualifiers and tournaments. As these are different stages of preparation, the process of selection and approach also stay different.” He spoke about the difference in intensity between club and international football, and the need to keep experimenting with various players, something which head coach Igor

Stimac has done since taking over the reigns two years ago. “It’s about the squad which you select. In club football you get two matches every 10 days which allows you to look at every player who has been performing well and improve within a short span. “The FIFA window is written in stone -- March, June, September, October and November, and then there are unofficial matches. In unofficial matches and exposure games, the aim is to try out as many young and new players as possible. Unless you try, you won’t get to know. “You have to give a chance to the deserving youngsters to see how they react and gauge their decision-making. After all of that, you move to the Qualifiers and the tournaments wherein there can’t be any compromise.” He was asked about the new set of players

who have donned the India jersey since the King’s Cup in 2019. “Indian football has changed its outlook. From the camp for the King’s Cup, we began our journey from scratch and looked for players who are adept in more technical play. “The easier way would have been to look for six players who can defend, and four who could chase, and someone who could score. The entire process is for Indian football’s secured future.” Talking about international friendly matches, he said, “The idea is to play matches against extremely tough opposition. The March friendlies were against Oman and UAE -- who are among the top teams in Asia. Playing Curacao was also a novel experience for the boys. “It serves no purpose playing lower-ranked teams. The AIFF also needs to be complimented for arranging all of that.” (PTI)

Mankad among 10 ICC Hall of Fame special inductees ahead of WTC final

DUBAI

THE ICC on Sunday inducted 10 icons of the game, including India’s Vinoo Mankad, into its illustrious Hall of Fame with two players each from five eras, dating back to cricket’s early days, making it to the list. The announcement has been coincided with the inaugural World Test Championship final, to be played between India and New Zealand from June 18 in Southampton. “The 10 legends of the game to be inducted have all made a significant contribution to the history of Test cricket, and join an illustrious list of ICC Hall of Famers, taking the total number to 103 as a result of this intake,” the ICC said in a statement. The inductees are Aubrey Faulkner of South Africa and Monty Noble of Australia for the early era (pre-1918), Sir Learie Constantine of West Indies and Stan McCabe of Australia for the inter-war Era (1918-1945), Ted Dexter of England and Vinoo Mankad of India for the post-war Era (1946-1970), Desmond Haynes of the West Indies and Bob Willis of England were inducted from the ODI era (1971-1995) while Andy Flower of Zimbabwe and Kumar Sangakkara of Sri Lanka were from the modern era (1996-2016).

Considered one of India’s greatest-ever all-rounders, Mankad played 44 Tests, scored 2,109 runs at 31.47, took 162 wickets at 32.32. He was an opening batsman and slow left-arm orthodox bowler. His most famous feat was against England at Lord’s in 1952 when he scored 72 and 184 and bowled 97 overs in the match. He is one of only three cricketers to have batted in every position during his Test career. Later, he also coached another legendary cricketer and fellow ICC Hall of Fame member from his country, Sunil Gavaskar in Mumbai. On Mankad’s induction, Gavaskar said: “Vinoo Mankad’s legacy has been to tell the aspiring Indian cricketer to believe in oneself. He was a great proponent of self-belief.” “He was the one who kept saying to me that you need to keep scoring runs and keep at it. When you get a 100, let that be the knock on the selector’s door. If it is unheard, then score that double hundred and let that knock be even louder.” “You can have the best technique, but if you do not have the temperament to support it you will not succeed, you have to keep hanging in there and have that self-belief. That was the greatest lesson I learnt from him.” One of the greatest wicket-keeper-batsmen and astute captains of the modern era, Sangakkara played 134 Tests, scored 12,400 runs at 57.40, took 182 catches and effected 20 stump-



ings, and was grace personified at the crease. He ended his career as the most prolific run-scorer of his country. An era earlier, Haynes was one half of the most prolific opening batting partnership in Test history alongside Gordon Greenidge. He played 116 Tests, scored 7,487 runs at 42.29. He featured in four ICC World Cups in the ODI era. Willis spearheaded the English bowling attack during some of their most memorable moments. He played 90 Tests, taking 325 wickets at 25.20. Standing two metres tall, he could make the ball bounce awkwardly on most pitches and possessed an excellent yorker and bouncer. His greatest result was the famous 8/43 that helped beat Australia at Headingley in 1981. A superb batsman of the post-war era, Dexter played 62 Tests, scored 4,502 runs at 47.89, took 66 wickets. He later served as England’s chairman of selectors and played an influential role in developing what is today’s MRF Tyres ICC Player Rankings. The ICC Hall of Fame Voting Academy, comprising active Hall of Fame members, a FICA representative, prominent cricket journalists and senior ICC figures, had voted online to identify their selections for induction in each of the five eras. (PTI)

NZ win 2nd Test, clinch series in England after 22 years

BIRMINGHAM

NEW Zealand defeated England by eight wickets in the second Test on Sunday and won the two-match series 1-0 - their first series triumph in England in 22 years. The win pushed New Zealand back to the No.1 spot in Test rankings. The win is New Zealand’s first at Edgbaston in five attempts, and is only their sixth out of the 56 Tests they have played in England. Set a target of 38 to win on the fourth day, after England were all out for 122 in their second innings, the Kiwis reached the target losing just two wickets, with opener and stand-in skipper Tom Latham scoring an unbeaten 23 off 32 deliveries. Devon Conway and No.3 Will Young, who replaced injured captain Kane Williamson for this Test, were the batsmen dismissed. Earlier, England were bowled out at their overnight score of 122 when they lost the last wicket of Olly Stone off the first ball of the day, with the pace bowler edging a Trent Boult delivery to wicketkeeper Tom Blundell. Although the Kiwis lost Conway early for three, Latham ensured they reached home without much drama. This was the first Test series defeat for England at home since the 2014 series loss to Sri Lanka. It was also New Zealand’s first series in England in 22 years. They had last won a Test series in England in 1999, under Stephen Fleming’s captaincy. (IANS)



New Zealand's Tom Latham (left) holds the winners trophy as he stands with teammate Kane Williamson after their win in the second Test match against England at Edgbaston in Birmingham, England on Sunday

BRIEF SCORES

England: 303 and 122 (Mark Wood 29, Ollie Pope 23, Neil Wagner 3/18, Matt Henry 3/36, Ajaz Patel 2/25, Trent Boult 2/34); New Zealand: 388 and 41/2 (Tom Latham 23 not out). Man of the Match: Matt Henry; Man of the Series: Devon Conway

WTC: Heavy-scoring Indians have edge over NZ batsmen

NEW DELHI: With less than a week to go before the start of the World Test Championship (WTC) final, the Indian batting unit looks better and more experienced than its New Zealand counterpart in the WTC. While India has as many as five batsmen among top 15 top scorers in the tournament, New Zealand have none. New Zealand’s batting mainstay, skipper Kane Williamson, is the highest placed, at 16th in the list with 817 runs scored at 58.35. Part of the reason why he is so low in the run-getters’ list is because he has played just nine matches as against the Indians above him in the list who have played many more games. Cheteshwar Pujara (818 runs in 12 matches at an average of 29.21), Mayank Agarwal (857 in 12 by at 42.85), Virat Kohli (877 in 14 at 43.85), Rohit Sharma (1030 in 11 at 64.37) and Ajinkya Rahane (1095 in 17 at 43.8) are all above Williamson. However, barring Sharma, no Indian has been able to match the New Zealander’s batting average. Spin bowling all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja, lower down in the list with 469 runs in 10 matches, too has a better average (58.62) than Williamson. Apart from Williamson, though, the rest of the Black-caps batsmen have been unspectacular. Left-handed opener Tom Latham has scored 680 runs in 11 matches at 40.00, Henry Nicholls has 585 runs in 10 matches at 41.78 while Ross Taylor has 469 in 11 matches at 31.26. Wicketkeeper-batsman BJ Watling has 417 runs in 10 matches at 29.78. As many as eight Indians have scored over 400 runs in WTC and all of them except one are averaging above 30. Only Cheteshwar Pujara averages below 30. And six Kiwis have scored over 400 runs and five of these are averaging above 30. India have not played a single Test in England during the WTC campaign and it remains to be seen how they adjust to the Southampton pitch. (IANS)

French Open defends ‘pragmatic’ stance in Osaka dealings


PARIS: French Open organizers said they took a “pragmatic” approach in their dealings with four-time Grand Slam champion Naomi Osaka earlier in the tournament, insisting they tried to engage with her several times before she decided to withdraw from the clay-court Grand Slam. Osaka withdrew from Roland Garros after she was fined USD 15,000 for skipping the postmatch news conference after her first-round victory at the French Open. She said she experienced anxiety before speaking to the media and revealed she suffered bouts of depression. “We really tried to engage with Naomi several times, several ways, including on the practice courts, including in writing,” said Amelie Oudea-Castera, the French tennis federation director general.





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