

New Delhi: The BJP on Sunday hit out at the ruling-AAP in Delhi alleging that it did not build any hospital and flyover during its rule between 2015 and 2019. Citing replies to two RTI queries filed in 2019 by Tejpal Singh, a city resident seeking information about health-care and infrastructure initiatives by the Delhi government, the BJP's national media in-charge and chief spokesperson Anil Baluni said., that by making "false" claims about development works, the AAP has cheated people.



# Womenia

## The girl who inspires fellow females

ASKARI JAFFER

With fast-growing followers and subscribers on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, Anisha is one of the top female influencers on the digital platform with 2.7 million subscribers on YouTube and 461k Instagram followers.

Since Anisha's main motive of the channel is to inspire girls, she had the once in a life time opportunity to meet President Barack Obama in person and speak about her aim to do more for women all around the world. Anisha has also collaborated with Priyanka Chopra, Kartik Aaryan, Sara Ali Khan, Rajkumar Rao, Boman Irani and many more.

Before founding her YouTube Channel, Anisha was an actress in multiple films and theatre productions in India, USA, Switzerland and Germany. Anisha studied at the Lee Strasberg Theatre & Film Institute in Los Angeles, California. She is fluent in German, English and Hindi and semi-fluent in French as well.



**Anisha Dixit, previously known as 'Rickshawali' is a girl-centric comedy influencer and Youtuber popularly known for the new spin that she brings on to the day-to-day activities of Indians and most importantly women, through her sketches and comedy vlogs**

Sharing about her journey, Anisha shares, "It's been a roller coaster ride with lots of ups and downs, yet an amazing journey. Everything comes with its own pain and pleasures. There have been some terrible times in the journey but also there have been great times too. I was an aspiring actress trying to make it in Bollywood like many others and used to go to auditions day in and day out. After facing more than 500 rejections from my auditions, my then boyfriend Caleb, who happens to be my husband now, suggested that I explore YouTube. So, then I started to figure out how to even make videos because in 2013 there were hardly any independent creators in India. While I was trying to understand how YouTube works, I was simultaneously giving auditions side by side. At the beginning I had no idea where this was going or if this even had a future but later on when things started to take off and I gathered a small community I realized I could finally be in front of a camera without being dependent on auditions. And that is how my journey as a content creator started. Initially my family really didn't support me, I mean who will support you in something which is not seen as a career option, back then. However, my mother was always supportive since day one and still is my biggest supporter."

Anisha believes that social media is the perfect platform to inspire women. Infact,

her main aim has always been to speak about problems women and girls go through and try to raise awareness about the same. She also tries to inspire them in whatever ways possible.

She adds, "I have seen it work. Trust me at the end of the day when you see DMs of girls telling you how you have changed their lives or inspired them to do something, that gives you more satisfaction than anything else in this world. I want to inspire more and more girls out there and to bring more smiles on people's faces and motivate them to follow their dreams and never give up."

Sooner or later, Anisha is going to try her hands on reaction or commentary videos. She has been planning to do this since a long time which will be up on her channel anytime soon.

"I might put my hand on light-hearted Roasting as well, have never done it before but this will be fun," ends the influencer.



TWEET PATROL



**PRIYANKA**  
**@PRIYANKACHOPRA**

Happy Easter to everyone celebrating.  
Lots of love and joy!



## On an epicurean journey

PUJA GUPTA

Kamiya Jani, who founded Curly Tales in 2017 as a personal blog, says that she left her job to explore the world. Her videos often pop up on our Facebook feeds and give major travel goals. Mother of one, Kamiya Jani quit her full-time job as an anchor to follow her passion for traveling and exploring the world. Curly Tales, is one of the most popular online platform that shares recommendations for food and travel.

Jani talks about her journey, her venture, apart from her views on the present scenario of the travel industry.

**When did you begin your journey as a content creator, and how has your journey been till now?**

Even though I started this journey by writing blogs and articles, I realised that not too many platforms were making videos around this. That is when I forayed into videos, which were very well received by everyone who watched them. The journey has been full of excitement, starting with just me and my passion for food and travel. I now have an amazing team of 25-30 people.

What started as a food and travel platform where I would make 1-minute videos on topics of interest - from street food, unique servings in restaurants, we have surely come a long way. We are now well placed to host celebrity interviews, wherein I invite renowned personalities for a brunch. They then discuss their journey, their passion for travel, and their food experience, through a very candid and free-flowing conversation. This concept became pretty unique, and was well received by the audiences.

**What was your inspiration to start your journey as a traveler?**

I was working as a business news anchor at a renowned business news channel, and I had been a journalist for the past 10 years, before Curly Tales. Although I enjoyed that stint entirely, I used to feel pretty confined in the space. While on the job, I strongly felt that I wanted to enjoy myself exploring the world.

When I switched, I was already a mom of a three-year-old daughter. I wanted to pursue my dreams with a simple thought - if not now, then when. I wanted to follow my passion for traveling on a personal level. Initially, I just started documenting my experiences and publishing on Facebook, where I found a community of like-minded people that could relate to my content. Additionally, a lot of women started looking up to me, by telling me that despite being married and a mother I still pursued my passion. This only gave me more motivation and drive to continue my journey, document it and publish it, and engage the community with my recommendations and their suggestions.

The whole journey from content has taken a shift to commerce. We are not just recommending but also selling some of these experiences now. Recently, we experienced a staycation



package for a five-star hotel, and over 500 people bought that experience through Curly Tales on Facebook after watching our video on it. In all, our journey started from a passion, moved to content creation, to curation and it is now in the stage of commerce, where the transactions are happening based on recommendations through Facebook.

**Given that you are also a part of Facebook's ongoing 'More Together' campaign which focuses on the power of connections, how do you relate to it?**

The power of connections is all about working together. The connection has been with my team who has helped me build the foundation of Curly Tales and the connection with the followers, who have been following us since we started with 300-400 followers. Moreover, some of those followers have now turned into our clients. I feel all this personifies the power of connections - something that has happened through Facebook. This has brought me even closer to the essence of Facebook's More Together campaign.

**The pandemic induced disruption in the travel space, forced people and travelers to become homebound. How did you cope up with the situation?**

The pandemic allowed me to relocate at my business. Even though Curly Tales is in the travel space, travel can never be replaced with an online experience. We did some virtual tours but the joy of traveling outdoors can never be replaced by anything else. We were positive that we will be back. The pandemic also allowed us to relocate at our content strategy and position ourselves the way we wanted to. During the pandemic, we got an opportunity to focus on written content, and use instant articles on Facebook as traveling guides for people who needed to be reunited with their families. Through this process, we became

a catalyst and a mediator of informing people as to how they can travel during tough times.

**Share some insights into what went in the travel community during the last few months. Are you excited as travel opens up slowly?**

We definitely saw a lull period which started from March-end and went out till September-October, up until domestic flights started. Even when flight operations started, it was not much for leisure, and rather about emergency travel, where people were looking to reunite with their family members. Once travel started, the market bounced back due to the pent-up demand of people wanting to travel. The demand was clearly at its peak and there was a 'revenge travel', that saw, where people were wanting to get out of their homes and explore, even if it meant to get away on road trips.

I do think that domestic tourism is growing and has caught up already. This is also why we have started our new show "I love my India", where we discover hidden gems in India and where Indians can actually find international experiences right here in the home country.

**What were some of the challenges that you faced, when you shifted to this from your job? How did you overcome them?**

I gave myself a time limit of one year, thinking that I will boomerang into my job. But as fate had it, there was no looking back. The biggest challenge for me in this journey has been to find people with whom I can share my passion. A shared vision fueled by mutual passion leads to the meaningful content of relevance and keeps the team motivated. I feel blessed to have an amazing team that meets these requisites, and have been instrumental in taking Curly Tales to where it is today.

### NEWS ROUNDUP



**Rakulpreet's motto: Laugh as much as you breathe**

Bollywood actress Rakulpreet Singh has shared a candid picture and the mantra she follows. Rakul posted a picture on Instagram, where she is seen dressed in denim shorts and white vest. In the image, she is seen sitting on a yacht.

"Laugh as much as you breathe and love as long as you live A #sundaymoodA #happyeaster #candidmoments," Rakul wrote.

On the work front, Rakul features in the upcoming digital film "Sardar Ka Grandson" alongside Arjun Kapoor. She also shares the screen with Ayushmann Khurrana in Anubhuti Kashyap's "Doctor G". The actress will also be seen alongside Amitabh Bachchan and Ajay Devgn in Devgn's upcoming directorial "MayDay".

### DEEP DISH PIZZA DAY

Pizza lovers far and wide will be making the most of Deep-Dish Pizza Day. This is just the holiday for those admirers of a thick, tasty crust filled with delicious toppings and baked to perfection!

It might be a good idea to start talking about deep dish pizza by taking some time to acknowledge Pizzeria Uno's founder, Ike Sewell, without whom this day wouldn't exist. In fact, without him, the deep-dish pizza wouldn't exist—and that would be a very sad world.

Sewell is credited with creating the spectacular deep-dish pizza in 1943 in Chicago, Illinois, USA. This wonderfully tasty pizza, also known as Chicago-style pizza, is characterised by a superb buttery crust that can be as high as 3 inches tall along the edges, combined with generous amounts of flavour-some sauce, delectable toppings and cheese.



Once the idea for deep dish pizza caught on in Chicago, it was only a short time before it became a trademark of the city—and in doing so it became the exact opposite of its rival pie: thin crust pizza from New York.



## The ultimate guide to slay that traditional look

Fashion trends are constantly evolving and style enthusiasts are hooked to the latest collections and options that are available on online and offline clothing stores. These traditional wears can swing from being maximalist to minimalist, going well with all body and skin types. However, the idea is to select the Kurti that can be easy to style and compliment the wearer without being overpowering.

Below are some quick tips and guides by Anuj Mundra, Chairman & MD, Jaipurkurti.com based on each body type to nail the traditional look with manipulation of designs and colours.

#### Apple shaped body

If your upper body is wide compared to the lower body with rounded shoulders, average to big bust or fullness around the middle, it's best to go for darker

shades with cotton and silk fabrics as they do not cling to the body. Necklines that are V-shaped or embellished will tend to draw attention to the much-endowed bust. Flared and cuffed sleeves will help in highlighting the best assets while accentuating your best features.

#### Banana shaped body

Banana-shaped body or the rectangular body type, is an evenly proportionate shape, which means that the shoulders, hips, and waist are evenly proportioned. The size can vary from small to medium bust but the waist is not defined. The features for the right Kurti that will compliment this body type include a broad and deep neckline with a cinched waist. One can opt for panel detailing along with pleats and a front placket. While choosing the bottoms, select slightly

slim and sleek bottoms such as churidars or leggings to complete the look.

#### Pear shaped body

The pear-shaped body types are one with full hips and thighs along with defined waist and narrow shoulders. Wearing lowers which are dark in colour, teaming up with lighter Kurtis will draw attention to the torso. Necklines that have collar patterns, boat, or square cuts will enhance the look. For sleeves, one can go for a bishop and roughed arms. Straight-long Kurtis will add length to your body.

#### Hourglass shaped body

This body type includes a defined waist and bust along with the bottom and hips. With this body type, you can carry off the Kurtis of all types. Pair them with palazzos and or straight-line

pants and you will get a stunning look. Do not go for ill-fitted Kurtis. A flared Kurti can be the best pick as it will give a fuller look. Additionally, a streamlined cut would prove to be perfect for this body type.

#### Inverted triangle shaped body

This body type calls for a straight and squared shoulder line along with a smaller bottom. Choosing flared Kurtis that fit well on the bust and slightly low necklines that will take away the attention from broad shoulders. Sleeves in the raglan style create an illusion of an evenly distributed look throughout the body and would be perfect for this body type. Make sure that you go for longer Kurtis and layer them with Patiala or skirt. One can avoid anything with strong shoulder detailing or high necklines to shift to an appealing style.





# Akhara Parishad seeks renaming roads, draws Opposition ire

**PRAYAGRAJ**

THE Akhil Bharatiya Akhara Parishad (ABAP) has demanded renaming of all roads named after the Mughal invaders and Britishers.

ABAP chief Mahant Narendra Giri said, "India got Independence 74 years ago and roads named after Mughal invaders like Tughlak, Humayun and Babur and Britishers in Delhi should be renamed after Chandra

Shekhar Azad, Subhash Chandra Bose, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Gulzari Lal Nanda and Veer Abdul Hameed."

He further said, "Why should roads still be named after Mughal invaders and Britishers who looted and divided the country? Most countrymen, particularly youngsters, feel embarrassed after seeing roads named on invaders. These roads should be renamed on the names of martyrs who laid their lives

for the country."

He explained, "Visit any city of the country and you will find roads named on Mughal invaders or Britishers who looted, divided the country. We demand that the union government should rename all these roads on our freedom fighters and martyrs."

The ABAP statement has led to a controversy with the opposition denouncing the statement. "The government should function according to

the Constitution of the country and not as per whimsical demands of priests and saints or else it will set a dangerous precedent. The contribution of Mughal emperors in making India a great nation cannot be forgotten," said Samajwadi Party district spokesperson Daan Bahadur 'Madhur'.

He accused the saffron brigade of diverting the attention of the common man from persisting problems like unemployment and in-

flation to irrelevant issues.

The state Congress leader Mukund Tiwari said, "It is an unfortunate statement. Roads are named on personalities who made our nation great irrespective of their caste, creed and religion. There were many good administrators who worked for the unity and integrity of the country. The saffron brigade is trying to generate a new controversy to divert attention from core issues in the Panchayat elections."



# Take custody of Ansari by April 8: Punjab to UP Govt

**CHANDIGARH/BARABANKI /BALLIA**

PUNJAB'S home department has asked the Uttar Pradesh Government to take custody of gangster-turned-politician Mukhtar Ansari from the Rupnagar jail on April 8, with BSP MP Afzal Ansari on Sunday saying that his brother's "safety" is now the responsibility of the judiciary and the Yogi Adityanath dispensation.

Mukhtar Ansari, who is wanted in various cases in Uttar Pradesh, has been lodged in the Rupnagar district jail in Punjab since January 2019 in connection with an alleged extortion case. In a letter to the Uttar Pradesh Additional Chief Secretary (Home), the Home Department of Punjab asked for suitable arrangements to be made for the transfer of under-trial prisoner Mukhtar Ansari.

"The said handover is to be made at district jail Rupnagar on/before April 8," the letter stated. It also said that Mukhtar Ansari suffers from certain medical conditions and the same may be kept in mind while making arrangements for his transport from Rupnagar jail to Banda jail in Uttar Pradesh. Afzal Ansari, who is the MP from Ghazipur, told PTL: "The safety of Mukhtar after he comes to the Uttar Pradesh jail is that of the judiciary and of the Yogi Adityanath government. The court should monitor the



safety and medical facilities given to Mukhtar."

He also said that the safety of life of any citizen is the responsibility of the government. "This duty increases by twice when the prisoner is in judicial custody and by four times, when the state government files a petition in the Supreme Court saying that the hearing of the case is getting affected," the MP said.

In its letter, the Punjab home department referred to the March 26 Supreme Court order that had directed the State government to transfer the BSP's MLA from Mau, Mukhtar Ansari, to Uttar Pradesh's Banda jail in two weeks. Delivering the order, the apex court had also noted that Mukhtar Ansari was allegedly involved in various cases of attempt to murder, murder, cheating and

conspiracy apart from offences under the Gangsters Act, lodged in Uttar Pradesh and 10 of these cases are at different stages of trial.

The Uttar Pradesh Police, officials said on Sunday, has set up a special investigation team (SIT) to further probe into the issue of fake documents of the ambulance which was used to ferry Mukhtar Ansari from the Rupnagar jail to a Mohali court recently. Barabanki Superintendent of Police Yamuna Prasad on Sunday said the SIT has been constituted under the additional superintendent of police (north). BSP MP Afzal Ansari said his brother had nothing to do with the ambulance case.

"The reports of Mukhtar purchasing the ambulance using his MLA funds is false. Had it been the case, it could have been ascertained by going through the government documents," he said. On April 2, a case was registered in Barabanki after the documents of the ambulance bearing a Uttar Pradesh registration number were found to be fake. Mukhtar Ansari was on March 31 produced before the Mohali court in connection with the alleged 2019 extortion matter. Amid tight security arrangements, Ansari was taken into the court in a wheelchair. He was sent back to the Rupnagar jail in the ambulance after the appearance.

## DIRECT PAYMENT TO FARMERS

# Sidhu slams Goyal, says Centre wants to destroy mandi system

**CHANDIGARH**

CONGRESS leader Navjot Singh Sidhu on Sunday attacked Union Food Minister Piyush Goyal over his letter regarding the issue of direct payment to farmers and alleged that the central government wanted to "destroy and disrupt" the state's tried and tested mandi system.

Goyal had written a letter to the Punjab government asking it to implement a system for direct payment to farmers for crop procurement. The state government was also asked to integrate land records available with the revenue department with the procurement portal. Addressing the media in Patiala, the cricketer-turned-politician alleged that the motive of the letter was to "disrupt" the age-old, tried and tested, and successful mandi system that allows for the implementation of minimum support price (MSP) in



the state. It also intended to create a "division" between arhtiyas (commission agents) and farmers in the state, he claimed.

This letter is part of a "larger conspiracy" to stall the procurement of wheat crops in Punjab and destroy the state's agricultural economy, he alleged. Sidhu said according to Goyal, the revenue department of the state government had all the information about the land records of the state's farmers. But according to the data collected by the National Sample Survey for year 2012-13, it shows that more than 24 per cent of

the land under cultivation in Punjab is under tenancy, he added.

"These tenancy contracts are oral or unwritten in nature," he said, adding that the land under tenancy might have increased and not decreased over the years. If the sale of wheat crop is allowed with ownership rights, then about 25 to 30 per cent farmers will not receive payment for sale of their crops, he claimed. The former Punjab minister accused the centre of planning to "destroy" the state's successful Agriculture Produce Marketing Committee model and also questioned the timing of the letter.

"The timing of this letter is further questionable as farmers prepare for cultivation of Rabi crop," he said. He emphasised that the state and its people should come together and build "an alternative economic model" for Punjab's agricultural prosperity.

## UP STF nabs man accused of Maha MNS leader's murder

**LUCKNOW**

THE Uttar Pradesh Special Task Force (UP STF) has arrested a sharpshooter, Irfan Sonu, in connection with the murder of Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) functionary, Jameel Ahmad, who was shot dead in Thane district of Maharashtra on November 23 last year. Additional Director General (ADG), Special Task Force (STF), Amitabh Yash, said that Irfan has confessed that Nationalist Congress Party (NCP)

corporator, Najibullah, had hired him to eliminate Ahmad. Both Najibullah and Osama are on the run. Irfan, who originally hails from Gorakhpur, was arrested from a place near Kathauta Jheel in Gomti Nagar in Lucknow. The STF ADG said, "We are still tracing other people involved in the murder. Irfan has been handed over to a crime branch team of Thane police." Narrating the sequence of events of November 2020, inspector, STF, Satya Prakash, who arrested Irfan, said,

## UP panchayat poll candidate shot

**BAGHPAT**

A candidate in the upcoming panchayat elections in Uttar Pradesh's Baghpat district was shot by unidentified assailants. Shakeel, the gram panchayat candidate, was shot on Saturday night in Osika village. The assailants fled the scene after the incident. Local residents rushed Shakeel to a government hospital in Badaut from where he was referred to Meerut for advanced treatment. The police spokesman said that further investigations were underway and call details of the victim were being scrutinised.

# Ayodhya sadhu found murdered

**AYODHYA**

THE body of a sadhu, Mahant Kanhaiya Das of the Hanuman Garhi temple was found at Gushala of Charanpaduka temple on Sunday. He had been apparently bludgeoned to death in his sleep by unidentified assailants. The Mahant was also the head of Gulchaman Baag of Basantia Patti. Senior police officials rushed to the spot on hearing the news to begin an investigation. News of the murder of Mahant Kanhaiya Das spread like wildfire in the temple town.

Angry over the killing, several Naga sadhus and their followers



assembled at the Charanpaduka temple to lodge their protest against the murder.

Extra police force was deployed to maintain peace and law and order. Superintendent of Police V.P. Singh said that primarily personal enmity seems to be the motive behind the murder of the sadhu.

Forensic experts were called in to take fingerprints from the crime scene.

## 3 held for abducting, gang raping woman

**SHAHJAHANPUR**

THE Uttar Pradesh Police have arrested three men in connection with the alleged gang rape of a 25-year-old woman. The three have been accused of gang raping the woman on March 22 after abducting her from her house. The incident occurred in a village under the Mirzapur police station limits, the police said. On March 22, the woman was allegedly abducted by the accused from the roof of her house after which they took turns to rape her. Soon after, the victim escaped from their custody and reached her house. Jalalabad Circle Officer (CO) Massa Singh said, "The incident came to light when the victim narrated her ordeal to her husband, when he returned from Delhi on Holi. Following this, a case of gang rape was registered on Friday." The police detained the three accused on Saturday and the woman has been sent for medical examination.

# Delhi Police deploys 'Jaguar Highway' patrolling teams

**NEW DELHI**

THE Delhi Police has deployed 'Jaguar Highway' patrolling teams at vulnerable stretches in the north district in a bid to curb street crime, officials said.

The initiative has led to the arrest of 21 criminals till March 15, they said. According to police, 16 thieves, two robbers, two people with illegal arms and a snatcher have been nabbed by the patrolling staff. "To curb street crime in north Delhi, a new initiative of deploying Jaguar Highway Patrol Teams at vulnerable stretches, especially Outer Ring Road, was introduced on December 26 last year.

The teams have been deployed at their designated stretches in three shifts, which keep patrolling the area round-the-clock," a senior police officer said. "These patrolling teams also keep a tab on PCR calls related to their designated routes and nearby area, and reach the spot instantly. These teams also check suspects by implementing 'roko-toko' strategy," he said.



The officer said they have chosen Outer Ring Road as it is usually easy for criminals to escape via this route after committing the crime. The patrolling staff has so far checked 19,786 vehicles. A total of 3,808 vehicles were checked in January, 10,346 in February and 5,632 till March 15, the officer said, adding that 709 vehicles have been impounded this year so far. According to police, 463 vehicles have been deposited under section 66 of the Delhi Police Act (police to take charge of unclaimed property) this year. This number was 304 in 2020.

The number of calls about street

crime has come down due to this initiative. The strategy is effective as criminals know the stretch where strict patrolling is done and they avoid taking that route, police said. Although robbery incidents have marginally gone down, snatching cases have seen a sharp decline as compared to last year in six police stations -- Kotwali, Kashmiri Gate, Civil Lines, Timarpur, Wazirabad and Burari -- which cover Outer Ring Road of the district, police said. In January this year, there were 26 calls of robbery and 83 calls of snatching.

In the previous year, the number of robbery calls were 28 and snatching calls 172, they said. Similarly, in February 2021, police received 31 calls of robbery and 98 calls of snatching. In 2020, the number of robbery and snatching calls were 33 and 140, respectively, police said. Police have received 13 calls of robbery and 43 calls of snatching till March 15. In the previous year, the number of robbery and snatching incidents were 27 and 77, respectively, they added.





## "A premium Co-Living Space"

PROPERTY MULTIPLIER  
WITHOUT ADDITIONAL INVESTMENT

KT Residency approved by  Approved No. PO2400001598

SAFE

Earn extra sft\*

AFFORDABLE

9% to 11% Returns

NO MAINTENANCE

Assured rental income for 20years

# +91 95337 76694

www.ktresidency.com | sales@kapilproperties.com

■ ■ ■ ■ ■

■ ■ ■ ■ ■

■ ■ ■ ■ ■

■ ■ ■ ■ ■

■ ■ ■ ■ ■

■ ■ ■ ■ ■



## Rising corona cases, unfeeling authorities

INDIA records this year's biggest spike of over 93,000 Covid-19 cases. Weekend lockdown, night curfew has become imminent in Maharashtra. Pune district alone saw a spike of 10,827 Covid-19 cases and 66 deaths. Centre is rushing health teams to assist Punjab and Chhattisgarh States where the surge is high. Despite such alarming situation and reports that cases are on increase in the two Telugu States, the respective State governments seem to be blinking. "Track, Trace and Test" concept remains on paper. Real data is being kept under wraps. The State governments have no doubt created medical infrastructure last year when the pandemic broke out. But they do not seem to be putting to use even after the experience they had gained in han-

dling the crisis that struck the world last year. No one wants another lockdown and another financial crisis. The State governments which have not only gained experience in crisis management but are also armed with vaccine this year should have woken up early and taken up firm measures to take up special campaign to ensure that people do not say, "Mask Kaiku, corona tho margayana, Sarkar ne bol diya." But unfortunately, both governments are busy in conducting elections, calculating caste and religious equations and trying to outsmart the Opposition rather than control the spread of coronavirus. One also wonders if the review meetings with the Prime Minister or State Governor hold any sanctity. It is left to the Health Ministers and officials to attend the meeting chaired by the Prime Minister and even if the Chief Minsters participate they read out the script handed over by the officials reeling out data about number of beds, doctors etc but no one highlights what unique measures they had taken or are taking to contain the spread of the virus. No one shows the courage to say that even their own leaders were not following protocols in toto. No State government had

taken any special drive to see that people go to vaccination centres. In case of polls, they would send SMS and vehicles for votes. There are reports that in Andhra Pradesh some public representatives are organising huge blood donation camps on the eve of the birthday of the Chief Minister and claim that as against 1,000 donors who used to donate blood every year, this time another 27 people had joined them. This may help them win brownie points from the Chief Minister but, they are putting more and more people at risk. Majority of people in both the Telugu States do not use masks. For them, their leaders are the role models. "Yatha Raja Thatha Praja." Since adults do not use masks, children in the age group of 5 to 15 also do not wear masks. Reports indicate that these kids are proving to be the carriers. The States are repeating the mistake of last year and it cannot be excused in anyway or by anybody. Initially it is fun, but one should know that when you repeat a mistake, it is not a mistake anymore: it's a decision. And no government has the right to take decisions which would affect the lives of the common man and cripple him and the State financially.



## THE UNFOLDING TRAGEDY OF TIBET

LOBSANG SANGAY & KARMA CHOEYING

TIBET, famously called the roof of the world; a State in the Himalayas neighboured by India and China has for long been in a state of tussle with Beijing. China lays the claim over the entire Tibet and calls it its own territory; however, Tibet has always strived for an independent existence. This is among the many conflicts currently brewing in south Asia, probably the worse as far as the power imbalance is concerned. The water tower of Asia has for long witnessed the cold and dark nights under the communist regime of China. The process of democratisation is merely a ghost only if that ghost exists. This makes it imperative for the powers across the globe to play their role in fostering a dialogue between Beijing and Tibet, and only recently we have seen some improvement on that front and some progress will hopefully be on its way.

Tibetan people have struggled under the mighty and brutal fist of Beijing and since the independence of China we have been demanding our separate homeland. The division of Tibet into smaller units and segregating them from the mainland Tibet is a typical example of engineering. Tibet as known today is only a fraction of the historical mainland of Tibet. The Chinese have created a facade by giving the autonomous region of Tibet, which is what is left of Tibet after its repeated geographical divisions, an autonomy non-existent in practice. People in Tibet demand the unification of all the parts which were historically part of Tibet, and post that want a complete political, economic and religious freedom. People in Tibet have tried to resist the imperialistic control of the communist China in Tibet and have always raised their demand for independent Tibet. The inspiration to the people of Tibet comes mainly from outer Mongolia and Bhutan, both countries are doing quite well in managing their affairs and their foreign policy. The other countries in the region enjoy the power over their own destiny while in case of Tibet, the destiny of people is being meddled with and is mostly in the hands of Han Chinese, who have never been sympathetic to the people of Tibet.

The gross human violations in Tibet is not a new story and is not hidden from anyone despite the media ban and propagandistic approach adopted by Chinese government to have the control of one's destiny is the luxury Tibetans don't have. Young People are abducted from the tribal regions of Tibet and the same are inducted in PLA (People's Liberation Army), who are then sent to various regions of mainland China wherein they go through the process of political re-engineering; approximately half a million people have already been inducted in PLA from Tibet tribal regions and same are being engineered to serve the agenda of communist China. One of the major internationally recognized research organizations has stated the conditions being equally worse as that in Syria. The excruciating pain shivers the spine when one sees that people are not even allowed to decide on the number of children they can have. The free and fair process of governance in Tibet is just a mirage and the reality, just the opposite. The dilapidated condition of Tibetans is mostly being ignored and not reported, however, the reports which come out as Tibetans flee from Tibet in search of a peaceful asylum are very disturbing. The missing list of people from Lhasa and adjoining areas is growing and no political rival is left unmonitored. The accounts of the torture being administered to politically active workers in Tibet has seen no parallel.

The fear of losing identity is among the worst fears any community can encounter. The cultural identity and the religious identity of the people of Tibet is among the worst hit. Tibet and China are culturally diverse and have very little to nothing in common. The Chinese, however, are trying to impose their culture in Tibet which would subsequently mean the lost Tibetan culture. The freedom of religious expression is even more hit. The interference in the elections for Dalai Lama by China is not only protested against, but the proxy Dalai Lama which has been put in place in Tibet is not even revered by the people of Tibet. Tibetans have a strong notion of being separated from their religion and fears of Chinese Buddhism taking over Tibetan Buddhism under the protection of communist China. This is one of the grave situations as far as the freedom to profess and practice of religion is concerned.

The world needs to come together to solve this issue of gross human rights violation among other conflicts.

The US, the UK and India have been actively involved in resolving the long pending issue of Tibetans. The US and allied parties have actively participated in resolving the issues around the globe and the same needs to be done in case of Tibet. The democratic powers across the globe should come forth to rescue Tibet from this situation. The Bills must be passed in their respective Parliaments to put pressure on Chinese government to secure rights for Tibetan people. After the US under the Trump regime passed the Bill of Tibet Act, the Biden-led government should smear ahead the campaign while including Tibet in their main agenda. Given China's increasing assault on Tibetan human rights, the US has a larger role to play. They must appoint and empower an individual coordinator committed to the plight of Tibet. White House must step into curb China's role in picking up Next Dalai Lama. The world powers should come ahead and declare the situation as genocide of human rights seeking UN intervention. If the Biden administration chooses to lead it, this might result in exerting control over a situation where China is attempting to assimilate the culture and persecuting the religion.

Tibetans are peace and progress-loving people, however, that has to come along with meaningful freedom.

We also urge the people across the globe to help us raise the issue of Tibet before the world community and be part of securing a meaningful solution.

(Lobsang Sangay Sikyong is President of the Tibetan-government-in-exile, called Central Tibetan Administration. Co-author is Karma Choeying, CTA official spokesperson. Views are personal)

# Interest rate cut and the U-turn

### THE WAY AHEAD



Dr Bharat Jhunjhunwala

The government had announced a cut in small savings rate on March 31st but withdrew it in a few hours. For example, the interest rate on 5-year National Savings Certificate (NSC) was cut from 7.9 percent to 6.8 percent. The

interest rates on Kisan Vikas Patra, Senior Citizens Savings Scheme and Provident Fund were reduced and restored in tandem.

There is no serious reason for the depositors to cry foul, however. The interest rates need to change in parallel with the rate of inflation. For example, the interest rate on NSC in 2020-21 was 7.9 percent while the rate of inflation was 4.9 percent. The "real" interest rate obtained by the depositor was only 3.0 percent. The real interest rate is less because value of the principal amount reduces in the same measure as the rate of inflation. Let us say you deposited Rs 100 in a fixed deposit with a bank last year with an interest rate of 4.9 percent. You would have got one kilo of high-quality basmati rice last year. Now, you got Rs 104.90 from the bank this year with an interest Rs 4.90 added to it. However, the price of basmati rice has increased to Rs 104.90 per kilo in the meantime. Therefore, you would get the same 1,000 grams of rice for Rs 104.90 this year. The "real" gain to the depositor is the difference between the interest rate and inflation.

The rate of inflation has reduced from 4.9 percent to 3.7 percent at present. The rate of interest on the NSC, however, remains unchanged. The depositor will get Rs 107.9 on a deposit of Rs 100 in an NSC made last year. Thus, the real interest rate obtained by him would be 4.2 percent (7.9 interest rate minus 3.7 inflation rate). The real interest rate was 3.0 percent last year (7.9 interest rate minus 4.9 inflation rate). This has increased to 4.2 percent this year because the rate of interest has remained unchanged while the inflation has reduced. The reduction of interest rate on NSC from 7.9 percent to 6.8 percent done by the government, if it had been implemented, would have led to the depositor still getting a real interest rate of 3.1 percent (6.8 interest rate minus 3.7 inflation rate) — which would be nearly the same as the 3.0 percent real interest rate obtained by her last year.

The second justification for the reduction of interest rates is that the money deposited in these savings scheme is ac-

tually a loan taken by the government. About 95 percent of this money is used for government consumption expenditures and only 5 percent are used for public investment. The banks, in contrast, lend more for investment. I reckon about 50 percent of the money deposited with the banks goes to loans given for investments such as in buying taxis or putting up factories. The problem is that the interest obtained by the depositor from NSC is 7.9 percent while a 5-year fixed deposit with the State Bank of India would get him only 5.4 percent. Therefore, the depositors are reluctant to deposit with the banks. Correspondingly, the ability of the banks to give loans for investment is less just as the ability of the homemaker to invest in an online course for the child is less if she has less income. It was necessary to reduce the interest rates on NSC so that it became attractive for the depositors to deposit with the banks.

The third justification for reduction in the interest rate is that the government is able to borrow as much money as it wants through the sale of government securities at an interest rate of 6.2 percent. In comparison, the Government has to pay interest of 7.9 percent on NSC. Thus, the government has to bear an additional burden of 1.7 percent on the monies borrowed from the NSC. Let us say the government pays an additional Rs 1 crore as interest on NSC. The government has to collect taxes from the people from some other method to make this 1 crore payment. Therefore, the high interest rates on NSC only mean that the government will collect taxes from the people and provide additional benefits to the depositors of NSC. This would be like the head of the industrial establishment cutting the salaries of the workers and increasing the salaries of the supervisors.

The reduction of rate of interest on small savings such as NSC was justified for the abovementioned three reasons, namely, lower inflation, encouraging deposits in the banks and burden on the Government. The withdrawal of the reduction was not justified. I am confident that the Government will be compelled to again make this reduction soon.

More important is to note that our economic growth rate has been declining in the last six years. The Covid-19 pandemic has made the situation worse. The second wave of Covid-19 presents a further danger. A shopkeeper told me only the other day that his sales were still down by 25 percent from the pre-Covid levels. Accordingly, his profits were less, the goods purchased by him from the market for his consumption were less, and the total demand for



More important is to note that our economic growth rate has been declining in the last six years. The Covid-19 pandemic has made the situation worse. The second wave of Covid-19 presents a further danger. A shopkeeper told me only the other day that his sales were still down by 25 percent from the pre-Covid levels. Accordingly, his profits were less, the goods purchased by him from the market for his consumption were less, and the total demand for goods in the market was also less. The businesspersons do not find it profitable to take loans for investment in this condition. They would take loan from the bank and put up a new factory if there is demand in the market. They will not put up a new factory and not take loan from the bank when the demand for paper in the market is less. I think they would not take a loan even if the interest rate was made zero — as is seen in countries like Japan where there is no borrowing from the banks and growth is lagging despite zero interest rates

goods in the market was also less. The businesspersons do not find it profitable to take loans for investment in this condition. They would take loan from the bank and put up a new factory if there is demand in the market. They will not put up a new factory and not take loan from the bank when the demand for paper in the market is less. I think they would not take a loan even if the interest rate was made zero — as is seen in countries like Japan where there is no borrowing from the banks and growth is lagging despite zero interest rates.

The government has focused on mak-

ing it easier for the businesspersons to take loans to rev up the economy. However, that is not happening because of absence of demand. Therefore, the government must change gears. Instead of focusing on lowering interest rates alone, the government must in parallel make cash transfers to the common man as done in the United States and other countries to put purchasing power in the hands of the people, create demand in the market and jumpstart the economy.

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

# Mozambique attack survivors tell tale of horror

EMIDIO JOZINE

LUIZA Jose, a 52-year-old mother of five, says she came face-to-face with Islamic State-linked insurgents when they attacked the gas hub town of Palma in northern Mozambique 10 days ago.

"I was running to save my life ... they were coming from every street," she said from a stadium in the port city of Pemba housing some of the thousands who fled the violence. "I saw them with bazookas. They wore uniforms with red scarves ... tied to their heads."

Jose said the militants quickly overran her hometown of Palma, next to huge gas projects worth \$60 billion.

Aid workers believe tens of thousands of people fled the assault, which began on March 24. However, just 9,900 of those displaced had been registered in Pemba and other parts of Cabo Delgado province, according to the UN humanitarian agency OCHA.

Many could still be hiding in the surrounding forest, said the international aid group Medecins Sans Frontieres, and those who emerged have recounted seeing bodies of others who died of hunger or dehydration along the way.

Some were also killed by crocodiles or perished in deep mud, according to a contractor whose employee witnessed both.

Most communications to Palma were cut when the attack began, and Reuters has not been able to independently verify



witnesses' accounts. A spokesman for Mozambique's defence and security forces declined to comment on Saturday, while calls to the national police went unanswered.

The province of Cabo Delgado, where Palma is located, has been home since 2017 to a simmering Islamist insurgency now linked to Islamic State. Clashes between the militants and government forces around Palma continued as recently as Friday, security sources told

Reuters.

South Africa said on Saturday that Mozambique's neighbours would meet next week to discuss the insurgency.

Mozambique's government has said dozens were killed in the attack on Palma but the full scale of the casualties and displacement remains unclear.

Fato Abdula Ali, 29, said she was separated from her husband and three children in the chaos. Nine-months pregnant, she couldn't keep up with other residents

as they made their escape and delivered her baby son alone in the bush. She cut the infant's umbilical cord with a tree branch, she said.

The next day, she said, she stripped herself of her blood-soaked clothes and found another group of people who took turns carrying her to safety.

"My whole body aches," she told Reuters at a hotel in Pemba.

Luisa Jose said she spent almost five days in the bush, eating bitter cassava tubers and drinking from cloudy pools of water before making it to Quitunda, a village for people relocated by the mega gas projects led by major oil companies, including France's Total.

From there, she says, she was evacuated by Total but had to leave behind more than six family members, including her husband and a daughter, because there was no room on the boat.

Total on Friday pulled all of its remaining workforce from its project site near Palma, two sources with direct knowledge of site operations told Reuters, leaving it in the hands of the military. Total declined to comment.

Jose has had no news of her family members since she left them behind. They are among thousands believed to be stranded in Quitunda, according to aid workers and diplomats.

"Are they safe? Do they have shelter? Will they come back? I don't know," she said.



# Validity of expired driving licences to be extended for 1 year

- The Centre had taken the decision owing to prevailing corona pandemic in the country
- Asks the State governments to update number of driving licences issued daily
- Auto unions welcome the move

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

THE transport department to extend the validity of expired driving licence for a period of one year after the Centre gave directions to the State governments.

The motorists were asked by the transport department to go for learner's test again for not renewing their driving licence after the lapse of one year after the date of validity. The State government has started implementing this from December 24, last year when a motorist Irudaya Raj K, a resident of Lalaguda, Secunderabad applied for renewal of his licence which was due for expiry on June 30,



2018. When he approached the RTA office for renewal of his licence with late fee, Irudaya Raj was asked to go for re-test including learner's licence and also the driving test.

The motorists, especially those in transport sector, opposed as it would be difficult task to get the licence as they have to again secure medical certificate, badge and other formalities.

According to officials, the Centre has issued fresh notification on Saturday making changes to the rules and pro-

viding the motorists one year's time. Official sources said that the Centre has conveyed to the State governments to extend the validity of licence for one year in the wake of corona pandemic prevailing in the country. Sources said that the Centre has also asked the State governments to update the number of driving licences issued to the transport ministry on everyday basis. Apart from the driving licences issued, the authorities were asked to send the details of the number of vehicles getting

registered everyday in the State, so that a database could be maintained at the national level, said a senior official.

The auto unions have welcomed the decision of the government to extend the validity for one year. The Telangana Auto and Motor Welfare Union general secretary M Dayanand said that this move of the Centre was a welcome one. The State government should also implement these orders immediately as it had implemented the earlier ones, he demanded.

# SCB gets pleas to extend 50% property tax waiver

MEGHNA NATH  
HYDERABAD

AS a nationwide lockdown impacted almost everyone financially, taking a cue from GHMC, the residents of SCB are urging waiver of 50 per cent of property tax in Secunderabad Cantonment limits. A representation has been submitted to SCB CEO Ajith Reddy.

According to the residents of SCB, during the month of November last year the state government waived off 50% property tax in the GHMC limits but still there has been no such relief in the SCB limits. They question why the new rule is being implemented at SCB as Cantonment is a part of the city.

"Due to Covid lockdown and also during recent floods the economic condition of people was severely stressed, especially those of marginalised families. Last year the State government waived off property tax in GHMC limits. Hence, on Saturday, we submitted a representation demanding 50 per cent tax waiver and also requested SCB CEO Ajith Reddy to take immediate action to reduce property taxes in Cantonment



A social activist Telukunta Satish Gupta submitting a representation demanding 50 per cent tax waiver to SCB CEO Ajith Reddy

Board limits," said Telukunta Satish Gupta, a social activist, SCB. The State government announced a 50 per cent rebate in property tax in the State last year. The rebate will be applicable to those who pay tax up to Rs 15,000 a year in the GHMC and up to Rs 10,000 in other municipalities. "The order specifically mentioned other municipalities, and Secunderabad Cantonment Board is also one of the municipal authorities in

the State. Yet, there is no relief provided to the residents of SCB," deplored Venkat Ramana, a resident of SCB. "Residents of SCB are forced to pay high amount as property tax and most of the State government schemes are also not applicable to SCB. When property registration charges go to State government kitty, why is there a discrimination meted out to us?" asked B Ramesh, a resident of SCB.

# Perni describes Pawan Kalyan as 'a mike for hire'

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
TADEPALLI

MINISTER for Information and Public Relations Perni Venkataramaiah (Nani) slammed Jana Sena chief Pawan Kalyan for his remarks against the State government during his Tirupati electioneering.

Addressing a press conference at the party headquarters here on Sunday, the Minister said that Pawan Kalyan has been trying to whip up the Hindu sentiments, as he has been campaigning for the BJP, the party he earlier alleged was giving two 'rotten laddus' in the name of a special package for the State.

He said that Pawan is more like a rental mike, which would be in anyone's hands that pay for it. He said that politicising God was not a good thing, and one that commits such sin shall repay.

Perni Nani said that the same Pawan had remained silent when his allies (earlier TDP-BJP government) had demolished numerous temples in Vijayawada city, but is now targeting the government alleging that 150 temples were destroyed in the State.

The Minister alleged that Pawan hosted the TDP and BJP-



sponsored event and did full justice to the call sheet for what he was paid for. He said that there is no other actor beyond Pawan Kalyan who brilliantly acts in real life than in reel life.

Although he asked people to question the YSRCP government on irregularities, the public were in return ready to question him over his vague political stand. In 2014, he gave a slogan 'Congress Hatao, Desh Ko Bachavo' and stood by Chandrababu Naidu and the BJP. However, in 2019, he accused

the BJP for neglecting southern States and went to polls, joining hands with the Communist parties and Mayavati, but again after facing a huge defeat, he joined hands with the BJP, he added. Countering the allegations in Y S Vivekananda Reddy murder case, Minister Perni Nani questioned whether Pawan Kalyan knew that Vivekananda Reddy was assassinated during the reign of his partner Chandrababu Naidu or not. He said that the probe was being carried out by the CBI

which is working directly under Union Home Minister Amit Shah, and further criticised Pawan Kalyan for being ignorant and in exile.

Further, the Minister said that Pawan Kalyan has no commitment towards people or public service, and only comes out during elections to seek votes. He said that Pawan was never there for Kapus and was least bothered to stand up for them during hard times under the previous TDP regime.

- Plays the actor for trying to whip up Hindu sentiments during the public meeting in Tirupati
- Referring to former Minister Y S Vivekananda Reddy's murder case, Perni says the case is being probed into by the CBI which functions directly under Union Home Minister Amit Shah
- Further says Pawan has no commitment towards public service and he comes out only during elections to seek votes
- The Minister says the Jana Sena chief is well known in adopting vague political stands

# TDP intensifies focus on Tirupati LS by-poll

- Party State president K Atchannaidu camps in pilgrim town and leads the campaign
- Meanwhile, TDP national general secretary launches campaign for party candidate Panabaka Lakshmi at Satyavedu on Sunday
- On Monday, he will be touring in Tirupati and in the remaining five days he will be covering 5 Assembly constituencies
- Atchannaidu flags off Yuva Chaitanya Yatra organised by Telugu Yuvatha

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
TIRUPATI

THE TDP has intensified its campaign for Tirupati Lok Sabha bye-election. While the party State president K Atchannaidu has been camping in the city for the last two days and leading the campaign in Tirupati, the party national general secretary N Lokesh has been busily involved in chalking out the strategies and coordinating between the leaders.

Lokesh has started touring various places from Sunday onwards to campaign in support of party candidate Panabaka Lakshmi. He



TDP State president K Atchannaidu flagging off party's Yuva Chaitanya Yatra in Tirupati on Sunday

is expected to stay in the city till the election is over. On Sunday, Lokesh campaigned in Satyavedu constituency while on Monday he will tour in Tirupati city. In the next five days he will be campaigning in the remaining five constituencies.

Meanwhile, Atchannaidu flagged off Yuva Chaitanya Yatra in Tirupati city on Sunday organised by Telugu Yuvatha. The rally commenced from Jyotirao Phule statue at Balaji Colony Circle and proceeded towards NTR Circle, Krishnapuram Tana, Gandhi Road and concluded at municipal corporation office.

Speaking on the occasion, the leaders recalled various development activities carried out in Tirupati during TDP government

regime with which the youth had benefited a lot. The TDP government has created ample employment opportunities for the youth and put the State on the development path. To continue the development agenda there is a need to vote for the party candidate Panabaka Lakshmi, they said.

Party youth cadre has participated with much enthusiasm in the rally. Telugu Yuvatha State president Sriram Chinnna Babu, other leaders Chintakayala Vijay, B V Keerthi, Kesineni Swetha, Haareesh, MVV Bharat, Bandaru Sravan Sree, B Sudhir Reddy, senior leaders M Sugunamma, G Narasimha Yadav, B Sreedhar Varma, K Pattabhi and others took part.

## Contain Covid spread

Continued from P1

The reasons for the sharp rise in cases could be mainly attributed to the severe decline in compliance of Covid-appropriate behaviour, especially in the use of masks and social distancing, pandemic fatigue and lack of effective implementation of containment measures at the field level, it said. The PM also highlighted the need to ensure effective implementation of containment measures, besides the involvement of community volunteers in active case search and management of containment zones. For sustainable Covid-19 management, awareness of the community and its involvement is paramount, Modi said, adding that and there is a need to continue 'Jan Bhagidari' and 'Jan Andolan'.

As a part of spreading awareness about the importance of following Covid-19 protocols, a special campaign for Covid appropriate behaviour with emphasis on 100% mask usage, personal hygiene and sanitation at public places /workplaces and health facilities will be organised from April 6-14, the PMO further stated.

He also said that 5-fold strategy of testing, tracing, treatment, Covid-appropriate behaviour, vaccination will curb pandemic if implemented with seriousness. Vaccine R&D was also discussed along with the production capacity of existing manufacturers and the capacity of vaccines under trials. Vaccine manufacturers are ramping up their production capacity and are in discussion with other domestic and offshore companies to augment the same, the statement added.

## BUILDING CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

# Govt should disclose facts to people, demands TDP

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
MANGALAGIRI

TDP executive secretary Buchi Ram Prasad on Sunday demanded that the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) and the Jagan Mohan Reddy government to place the facts before the devotees in the shady MoU signed with a dubious company named Udveg Infrastructure Co Ltd for building a children's hospital.

Ram Prasad described Udveg as yet another suitcase company brought forward by CM Jagan Reddy and TTD chairman Y V Subba Reddy to loot the devotees' funds in the guise of donations. In addition to the plundering of sand, liquor, mines and so on, the ruling party has started a donations mafia in the name of God which was something the world has never seen before.

Addressing a press conference at the party headquarters here, the TDP leader demanded the TTD to immediately cancel the MoU reached with Udveg Infra and instead take up the

- Questions handing over the project to a suitcase company Udveg Infrastructure Co Ltd
- Instead the TTD on its own should take up the construction of the hospital, says TDP leader Buchi Ram Prasad
- Then even the devotees will come forward to make donations for the purpose, he points out

construction of the Rs 300 cr children's hospitals on its own without involving any third party. It was found out that the Udveg company put up a photo of a government stadium in Europe on its website to give a false impression on its track record. Ram Prasad said that the real fact was that the suitcase company was started by Sanjay Kedarnath Singh in 2018 and it had a balance of just Rs 1 lakh in

2019 and only Rs 2,600 as of now. The company claimed to be involved in construction, infrastructure, finance and consulting. But it had no business transactions of any sort till now. Some Telugu persons also became directors on its board.

The TDP leader strongly objected to the TTD coming forward now to give 10 acres of prime land to this suitcase company near the Alipiri Gate in Tirupati town for the development of the children's hospital. This land would cost anywhere between Rs 400 crore to Rs 500 crore. Once in possession, the Udveg Company might misuse the land and construct even a shopping mall there to make commercial exploitation.

Ram Prasad said that if the TTD came forward to construct the world-class children's hospital on its own, thousands of devotees will be there to give donations. The TDP would launch an agitation if the valuable lands in the temple town were given to the suitcase companies in the name of false and fake projects.

# Daily Covid count goes up to 1,321 in TS

HYDERABAD

TELANGANA'S daily Covid-19 count climbed to 1,321 as the surge continued in parts of the state, pushing the cumulative tally to 3,12,140 on Sunday. Five more deaths were recorded in the last 24 hours, which increased the total toll to 1,717. The spike in cases continued in several districts.

The daily count in Hyderabad crossed 300-mark to reach 320. Medchal Malkajgiri and Rangareddy districts bordering the State capital were the other worst-hit districts with 144 and 121 cases respectively. Nizamabad recorded 96 cases followed by Nirmal (64), Sangareddy (49), Jagtial (46), Warangal Urban (43), Karimnagar (41), Rajanna Sircilla (35), Adilabad (30), and Mahaboobnagar (30). The total number of active cases jumped to 7,923, including 3,866 who are in-home/institutional isolation. Admissions in both government and private hospitals treating Covid continued to be on rise. A total of 4,057 Covid patients were admitted in 61 government and 229 private hospitals. Bed status in government hospitals shows that 7,498 out of 8,542 beds were vacant, while in

Five more deaths take the total toll to 1,717



private hospitals 5,337 out of 8,350 beds were vacant. A total of 293 people recovered from the pandemic during the last 24 hours, taking the cumulative recoveries to 3,02,500. The recovery rate has come down to 96.91%. It was still above the national average of 93.1%.

Authorities conducted 62,973 tests during the last 24 hours. Of them, 53,960 samples were tested in government laboratories, and remaining 9,013 in private. With this, the number of tests conducted in the state so far climbed to 1,03,92,927.

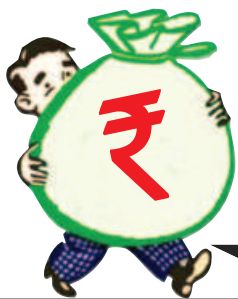
Samples tested per million population rose to 2,79,229. Marriage party havoc In Sidapur village of Nizamabad District, 86 persons who attended a marriage were affected by corona, creating panic in the village. Following this, officials became alert and started conducting corona testing camps for the last three days. In Nizamabad District, as many as 865 persons were affected by corona during the last 20 days. Minister Prashant Reddy directed the officials to arrange for quarantine camps in the district.







“ Minimising downside risk while maximising the upside is a powerful concept – Mohnish Pabrai



# HANS INVEST

Stocks.MFs.Bonds.Commodities



## Gold prices fall as \$ holds firm

Dr H C Upadhyay

HYDERABAD: Following the US dollar gaining the strength, gold prices took a southward route during the week ended Saturday. Further, prospects of easing of tensions between US and Iran following the strategic diplomatic moves by both the sides with the overt and covert support of the well-wishing nations such as Russia also helped gold to settle at the realistic level. Consequently, New York gold declined in the global markets and closed at \$1,736.83 (per ounce) while, silver followed suit and closed at \$25.07 per ounce). Platinum and palladium also followed suit and closed at Rs 28,478 per 10 gram and Rs 61,0136 per 10 gram respectively. Brent closed at \$64.65 per barrel while crude MCX oil was quoted at Rs 4,516 per barrel. Whereas Gold MCX stood at Rs 44,865 per 10 gram, the MCX Silver moved up marginally and closed at Rs 65, 040 per kg. Copper marched ahead and closed at Rs 669.25 per kg.

In domestic market, due to the recent recurrence of Covid-19, potential buyers preferred to remain indoors for most of the time. However, taking advantage of lower prices in the international market, traders imported sizeable quantity of the yellow metal. Now, this phenomenon is posing the problem of liquidity.

Barring marriage requirements, the off-take of gold has been minimal from individual side, both the precious metals recorded erratic movements during the week. Standard gold (24 carats) appreciated by Rs 870 and closed at Rs 46,580 per 10 gram. Ornamental gold too, moved in tandem and was quoted in the range of Rs 42,550-42,650 on the closing day. Silver (0.999) too, moved up marginally by Rs400 and closed at Rs 69,700 per kg. Considering the prevailing international scenario, the prices of precious metals are unlikely to rise in a near future.

# RBI policy will weigh on markets

## RISE IN BOND YIELDS COULD IMPACT SOME FII FLOW TO EMERGING MARKETS

CHERUKURI KUTUMBA RAO

buoyed by positive global cues and \$2.3-trillion infrastructure package announced by the US President Joe Biden, strong auto sales numbers and record GST collections reflecting improving economic environment, markets snapped two weeks losses to log impressive gains during the week ended.

The Sensex rallied 1,021.33 points, or 2.08 per cent, to 50,029.83, and the Nifty50 climbed 360.05 points, or 2.48 per cent, to 14,867.35. Broader market witnessed outperformance from Midcaps and Smallcaps. Weekend death count of 714 due to Covid was highest since October 21, 2020. Given the increase in cases in recent weeks, there has been lot of restrictions imposed by several States including night curfew, gatherings, ban on hotels & malls etc, which experts feel could impact the economy a bit in coming months, though the vaccination across the country is going on since January. In the coming week, investors will take cues from the outcome of the Reserve Bank of India's first monetary policy meeting of financial year 2021-22. Economists expect RBI to maintain status quo on interest rates given the rapidly evolving inflation trajectory and growth dynamics in the country. Watch out for the MPC's commentary on economic recovery in the backdrop of the second wave of coronavirus infections in the country and its update on inflation projections.

Market observers feel the rising bond yields could impact some FII flow to emerging markets, but overall the indication of improving economic recovery is a positive factor for emerging markets. Rising bond yields in US is driven by improving outlook on economic recovery.

Though this could strengthen dollar and create volatility in emerging markets in the short-term, the revival in US economy is good news for global equity markets. Look out for the minutes of the US Federal Reserve's latest policy meeting, due for a release on coming Thursday.

Market player's focus will shift to Q4 earnings numbers. Q4 numbers could be strong following better-than-expected numbers in previous three quarters. Investors' attention will be shifting back to fundamentals. This time, investors' expectations are rife for a strong earnings season led by healthy demand recovery and low base effect. On earnings front, revenue growth, margins expansion and management commentary will be key things to watch out for.

### Heard on the street

There's always some excitement starting a new quarter and new financial year. However, going by past experience, it can be seen that the market can get stuck on these numbers, too. Lot of times the market has to test the previous high level a few times before it can go higher. Many investors are hopeful that stocks will continue to climb in the Q1. Their optimism is pegged to the prospect of a surge in economic growth amid widespread vaccinations, fresh spending programmes by the government and earnings expectations. Still, they point to risks stemming from the coronavirus which seems to be increasing day-by-day as the second wave of Covid-19 has gradually been spreading fast in some parts of the nation, though there has also been an increase in vaccination. Over the past year, stocks have risen



sharply in expectation of an economic rebound. Now that it appears to be here, investors have 'Covid jitters', looking warily at inflation expectations and, ultimately, a reversal of RBI policy.

### Futures & options

Supported by bouts of short covering, derivative segment witnessed a strong pullback in the holiday-truncated week. Flavours of the week were metal and cement stocks. Reports of fresh increase in product prices and firm demand propelled Tata Steel, JSW Steel, Shree Cements and others to new highs. Stay invested for further gains.

With the Nifty going through a corrective and choppy phase, focus is back on defensives like FMCG, pharma and IT. Expect IT stocks to outperform against the benchmark index. Use declines to buy Infosys, HCL Tech and TCS. Expect sharp trading moves in banking and rate sensitive sectors after RBI announcement of the outcome of its policy review meeting on April 7.

On the back of AGR dues issue, telecom stocks are expected to remain range

bound in near term. The issue of further payment and the total amount due by telecom operators, Bharti Airtel, Vodafone Idea and Tata Teleservices, is back in the Supreme Court, which will now have to decide on the matter. However, none of the three companies paid the 10 per cent of the due amount on March 31, 2021. The reasoning of the companies is that whatever they have paid so far is more than 10 per cent so they were not required to pay anything extra by the March 31 deadline. After the strong pullback last week, markets may consolidate its recent gains in coming trading sessions. Stock futures looking good include Bata, ITC, HPCL, SAIL, Shriram Transport and Motherson Sumi. Stock futures looking weak include Bharti Airtel, escorts, Muthoot Finance, Naukri, Indigo and Godrej Properties.

### Stock pick

Power Mech Projects Limited is one among the leading infrastructure-construction companies based in Hyderabad. It has a global presence and provides a spectrum of services in power and infrastructure sectors. With 15,000 direct and 25,000 indirect work force and huge fleet of cranes and machines, it is capable of handling and executing over 4,00,000 MT annually while operating up to 55 sites simultaneously. The company has emphatically established a niche in power generation covering almost every segment including erection, testing and commissioning of BTG and BOPs, and modernisation of power plants and related civil works.

Power Mech extends operations globally and has presence in more than ten countries worldwide. The company has undertaken projects of all types, sizes including ultra-mega power projects,

super critical thermal power projects, sub critical power projects, heat recovery steam generators, waste heat recovery steam generators, etc. and entire civil works for power plants.

The company's subsidiaries include Hydro Magus Private Limited for undertaking hydro projects, Power Mech Industri Private limited in Noida, for fabrication, manufacturing and repairing of BTG parts, MAS Power Mech Arabia in Saudi Arabia, to extend the company's services in this part of the world and joint venture GTA Power Mech Nigeria Limited for undertaking project works in the African region.

### Why we are recommending the company

■ The company enjoys market leadership position in power O&M and erection business with a market share of 55-60 per cent. Diversification of business to non-power segment, especially civil (including railway, petro chemical, water etc) has helped the company to be in the growth track.

■ The company has an order backlog of Rs 7,353 crore (as on February 16, 2021), which shows revenue visibility for next 3 years.

■ Expect order backlog to grow at 14 per cent with an average order intake of Rs 3,500-4,000 crore per year. Revenue is expected to grow at a CAGR of 30 per cent during FY21-23 and ROE to be at 16.3 per cent by FY23.

Buy between Rs 565-580 for medium term price target of Rs 925-975. In the event of sharp correction in the broader market, stop loss should be at Rs 525. We are looking at a risk reward ratio of 1:6.

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



K Naresh Kumar

## Would falling interest rates affect your retirement plans?

has initially brought back the consumption demand while the supply side bottlenecks are still being pursued. These imbalances have resulted in inflation pressures. Though, not at an alarmed level but certainly beyond the comfort zone of a conventional setup. This is not a domestic trend but has been a feature across the countries as the supply chains struggled to pace up with the growing demand.

In addition to the various fiscal measures by the govt., RBI has been on a forefront in dealing with the fallout of the pandemic restrictions by employing numerous liquidity methods and also announcing a six-month period of moratorium on existing loans. The central bank was also involved in other activities to ensure sufficient liquidity in the banking system. The government while announcing various PLI (Production Linked Incentives) schemes across sectors in an effort to boost the revival has also announced the stalling of the IBC (Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code) procedures for a year.

The Union Budget has clearly articulated the increased borrowings for the past financial year and the continued pursuit of aggressive fund raising into this year. This has led to market participants to alter the anticipations of the bargain for them with the yield spikes.



The RBI has been on multiple 'operation twists', where they tried to tame the yield curve to their desired levels by trading instruments at various timelines simultaneously. This way they tried to sap the energy of the market participants.

While the demand has ramped up to pre-covid levels in many of the sectors, the supply didn't catch up to that level leading to some inflationary trend especially among commodities, etc. This global deflationary pressure has increased expectations of the market participants for a better yield than being offered, leading to completely abandoning of fresh auctions by the RBI. What investors need to acknowledge is that the reducing interest rate is not a new phenomenon but has been happening for decades and particularly evident in the last couple of decades. This is part of the unraveling global deflationary trend and India stands no exception. Moreover, the change in the accounting of borrowings (FCI from NSSF) has also put direct pressure on the government to

come clean on the cost of funding. This limits the options for investors pursuing these kinds of instruments in the fixed income space.

So, what options are left out for those depending upon these kinds of securities? One could continue to invest in these with lower expectations in the coming years but carrying the sovereign guarantee or foray into other asset classes to derive better yields. Of course, the choice to continue to invest in PPF or small savings schemes is not universal and has to be dealt at a personal level. But this is certainly a wakeup call for the young investors to have a sizable equity exposure into their retirement portfolios.

The government has been making multiple efforts for retail investors get access to the debt market through offerings like Bharat 22 ETF, etc. Though this is not a guaranteed return proposition, it does fall under the fixed income category and would deliver the results in the long run although with volatility. Also, the returns are not taxed in similar ways but through capital gains. The older generation, however, have to stick with the traditional options despite lower yields.

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

## Q4 results to shape market trend

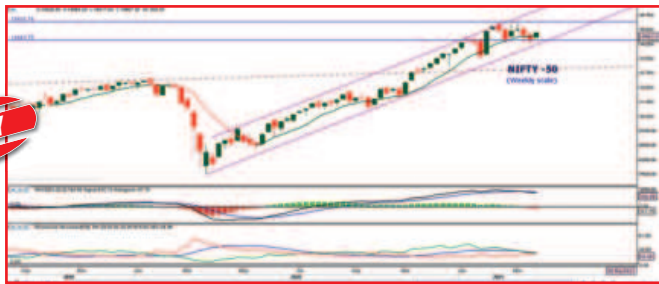
### Watch out for companies declaring earnings growth above 20%

THOVITI BRAHMACHARY

Indian stock market bounced back in a truncated week. It opened with a gap-up and traded within the Tuesday's range. The Nifty advanced by 375.90 points or 2.56 per cent during the week. All the sectoral indices gained. Nifty Metal and PSU Bank Index were top gainers with 8.7 per cent and 4.7 per cent, respectively. Remaining indices gained by 1.2 per cent to 3.2 per cent. Overall market breadth is not encouraging. FIIs invested Rs 1245.22 crore in March. In the three trading sessions last week, Nifty traded in a defined range. It opened with a big gap and sustained the gains until the end on Tuesday and ended with 338 points. But, the following two days of trading, it traded within the range of Tuesday. It tested 14880 level four times in last nine days. This level has become a strong resistance for now.

On a weekly chart, it has made a higher low, which is a positive sign. At the same time, it re-claimed 50 DMA, and 20 DMA is another positive sign. Even though it gained 360 points last week, the MACD histogram showed an increased bearish momentum. All the directional movement indicators, ADX, +DMI and -DMI, are below the 25 level on the weekly chart.

Even on the daily chart, the ADX is below 25 levels, and the -DMI is above the two. This struc-



ture is not indicating any great positive strength on the chart. But, the positive thing is, on a 75 minutes chart, Nifty formed an inverted head and shoulders kind of pattern, which is bullish. A close above 14880 is positive and can lead to a sharp upside move. This move can be a 600 point length, and the target is almost the previous lifetime high.

But on the downside, the 20 weekly average at 14230 is strong support. This average line is moving precisely like a trend line drawn from March lows. For next week, it is very difficult to forecast the trend. As long as it sustains above 14880, it will be with a bullish bias. Trading below this level means the consolidation phase will continue mostly within Tuesday's range. A move below 14617 is negative for the market, and it can fill the gap by testing 14500 levels. For a long-term trend, moving below 14230 is a very big negative for the intermediate trend.

The global markets are buoyant as S&P 500 hit an all-time high. But, dollar still trading above

93 levels and the 10 year US bond yields are consolidating for the consecutive week after touching the 14 month high. As we keep mentioning about the inverse relationship between bond yields and equities, let us wait for this historical fact to repeat this time.

Nifty Price-Earning (PE) ratio has changed as the calculation method has changed to consolidated earnings. With this new method, Nifty PE drastically came down from above 40 levels to 33.60. Even this figure is much higher than earlier tops in 2000 and 2008. The Price Book Value ratio remains at a higher level of 4.25. The earnings are due in another one week to ten days. These earnings will play a major role in market trend. Watch them closely for any improvement that will lead to a sharp jump in the stock prices. Watch out for the companies that declare earnings growth above 20 per cent.

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

## DERIVATIVES OUTLOOK

DASARI SREENIVASA RAO

The NSE Nifty recorded a sharp pullback above 14,800 after touching a low below 14,300 last Thursday. Analysts attribute reason for buying support across the board to the financial year-end short covering during the truncated week as there was no trading on Monday and Friday on account of Holi and Good Friday respectively. Options data is indicating that Call writers are moving to higher bands.

The 15,000 strike has the highest Call OI followed by 14,900/15,100/15,200/ 15,500 strikes. The 14,900 strike recorded a reasonable addition of Call OI, while remaining strikes witnessed offloading of Call OI. Coming to the Put side, highest

Put OI was seen at 14,000 strike followed by 14,500/14,800/14,700/14,600 strikes. Highest Put OI build-up was at 14,850/14,800/14,750 strikes, while remaining majority strikes recorded a fall in Put OI.

Dhirender Singh Bisht, senior research analyst (derivatives) at SMC Global Securities Ltd, said: "From the derivatives front, the 14,600 and 14,700 strikes seen adding hefty Open Interest in Puts, while Call writers were seen shifting to higher bands which points towards strength in current rally from lower levels. On the higher side, the 15,000 level would act as a major hurdle for Nifty in upcoming sessions, while on downside bias will remain in favour of bulls as far Nifty holds above the 14,600-

14,550 zone." Moreover, record GST collections also helped in improving sentiment further as the Nifty closed at the highest levels seen since mid-March. The Nifty gained almost 2.5 per cent during the week, while mid-cap and small-cap saw gains of more than 3.5 per cent during the week. Going ahead, analysts expect the NSE Nifty to find fresh upside momentum if it is able to sustain itself above 14,700 points.

From the options space, while the Call base remains at 15,000 Call strike, the Put base has inched up and moved to 14,700 strike. Despite the truncated week once again, options prices are richly valued, clearly suggesting expectations of volatility next week as well. According to ICICI Direct.com, the

F&O TRADING			
Product	Contracts	Turnover (Rs/cr)	Premium (Rs/cr)
Index Futures	3,98,709	37,987.24	--
Stock Futures	6,12,224	59,750.55	--
Index Options	7,66,45,897	71,40,199.53	16,169.92
Stock Options	10,23,153	1,03,100.89	2,642.94
F&O Total	7,86,79,983	73,41,038.21	18,812.86

NSE / As on Apr 1, 2021

14,700 points should be important support for the Nifty in the short-term and further strength can be seen if the closure among Call strikes.

ICICI Direct.com further stated that post February, volatility index continued to decline, which suggests more of a consolidation in broader markets and the Nifty has been largely in the range of 14,500 to 15,200 since then. Unless Nifty

moves out of this range, we can't expect any major change of trend, said analysts. Hence, stock-specific moves may continue in the result season, accordingly, Nifty may also move in this range only.

The metal space outperformed as it gained nine per cent last week. Analysts forecast FMCG and pharma stocks to continue upward movement in the week ahead.

"Indian markets ended the week

## Majority strikes record offloading of OI; Bank Nifty-Nifty price ratio drops to 2.28 level, may consolidate in broader range

on a positive note as bulls took the charge and lifted the sentiments for Nifty and Bank Nifty. Nifty ended the week above 14,850 mark, while leading banking names like Axis bank, ICICI Bank and Kotak Bank provided a boost to the banking index," said Bisht.

For the week ended April 1, 2021, BSE Sensex closed at 50,029.83 points, a net recovery of 1,021.33 points or 2.08 per cent, as against 49,008.50 points. NSE Nifty gained 360.05 points or 2.48 per cent and closed at 14,867.35 points from 14,507.30 points.

"The Implied Volatility (IV) of Calls closed at 20.57 per cent, while that for Put options closed at 21.13 per cent. The Nifty VIX for the week closed at 20.65 per cent. Put

Call Ratio of OI for the week closed at 1.67 and it indicates more Put writing than Calls," remarked Bisht.

### Bank Nifty

The NSE's banking index Bank Nifty closed at 33,858 points, a net fall of 539.8 points or 1.62 per cent from 33,318.20 points. The banking stocks underperformed as they're under selling pressure at every rise, declines among heavyweights have been used as buying opportunity. Ahead of the result season, analysts predict short covering in the banking space if it is able to sustain above 34,200. As per data from ICICI Direct.com, the current price ratio of Bank Nifty-Nifty fell marginally to 2.28 level. The Bank Nifty may consolidate in a broader range.



## Azharuddin offers to host IPL games in Hyderabad

NEW DELHI

FORMER India skipper and Hyderabad Cricket Association president, Mohammed Azharuddin on Sunday offered the state body's facilities to BCCI to host the upcoming IPL matches in case the games are shifted out of COVID-hit Mumbai.

The BCCI has decided to keep Indore and Hyderabad as stand by venues for the upcoming IPL beginning on April 9 following a massive surge in COVID-19 cases in Mumbai, which is scheduled to host 10 games.

The move came after 10 groundsmen of the Wankhede Stadium and a few event managers had tested positive for the deadly virus.

"In these difficult times there is all the more reasons for us to stand by each other. Hyderabad Cricket Association would like to offer its facilities to @BCCI to ensure that IPL2021 is conducted in safe and secure venues," Azharuddin wrote on his twitter handle.

Mumbai reported 9,108 new cases of coronavirus on Saturday and if things spiral out of control there could be a mini lockdown. However, a senior BCCI office-bearer on Saturday exuded confidence of hosting the games in Mumbai even if the situation worsens.

"Look, even if there is a lockdown, the teams are in bio-bubble and also it's a closed-door event. So we are still confident that IPL games in Mumbai will be held as per schedule with Delhi Capitals playing Chennai Super Kings on April 10 on the second day of the tournament," he had said.

"But Hyderabad and Indore are there on stand by in case the situation goes out of hand." As of now, none of the teams currently in Mumbai -- Delhi Capitals, Mumbai Indians, Rajasthan Royals, Punjab Kings -- have access to the Wankhede Stadium.

The first match at the Wankhede is scheduled to be held on April 10, with last year's finalists Delhi Capitals taking on three-time champions Chennai Super Kings. (PTI)



## Indian Premier League

# Consistent Sunrisers look for play-offs spot again

NEW DELHI

SUNRISERS Hyderabad (SRH) have made the play-offs for the last five years in the Indian Premier League (IPL), during which they became champions (2016) and runners-up (2018) once. Yet the team has never hogged the limelight like many other franchises. They have silently gone about their task of performing.

It was no wonder that in the mini-auction ahead of this IPL, they picked just three players. The franchise finished third last season, beating Royal Challenger Bangalore in the Eliminator, but lost to Delhi Capitals in Qualifier 2.

The team, led by David Warner, has a power-packed batting line-up. Along with Warner, they have Jonny Bairstow, Kane Williamson, Manish Pandey and have this year brought in Jason Roy for Mitchell Marsh, who pulled out of the IPL this week.

The Bairstow-Warner pair recorded four century stands and put on 791 runs in the 2019 season. Last year too, they were involved in a century stand and when Bairstow was rested owing to team requirements, Wriddhiman Saha stepped in and clicked, making a 45-ball 87 against Delhi Capitals to keep SRH alive. Such is the top-order batting strength of the Hyderabad franchise.

SRH also have a very strong bowling line-up, led by pace bowler Bhuvneshwar Kumar, who has returned to the squad after missing a major part of last year's IPL due to an injury. He is in form, and did well for India in the recent limited overs series against England.

Left-arm pace bowler T. Natarajan has had a fairytale last season and returns to IPL in just over five months as a seasoned India cricketer, after representing the national team in all formats over the last five months. He bowled a tight last over against England's Sam Curran at Pune to help India win the third and final ODI, and with it the series.

Known as the yorker king, Natarajan will have the support of Sandeep Sharma, a seasoned new ball bowler.

SRH's major strength is its spin bowling with leg-spinner Rashid Khan leading the charge. He will have fellow Afghanistan spinners, offies Mohammad Nabi and Mujeeb Ur Rehman, as well as India internationals Shabbaz Nadeem and Kedar Jadhav to support him.

Both Jadhav and Mujeeb were bought this season along with J. Suchith. These were the only three changes made to the squad by SRH which shows that they have been a fairly settled unit.

Jadhav has been brought in to provide the fillip to their innings towards the end.

SRH also have the services of Jason Holder, the West Indies all-rounder who turned up late in last year's tournament and then replaced Bhuvneshwar and performed very well with the ball. Holder, Rashid, Vijay Shankar and Nabi are the all-round options.

Warner is eying the final again. "It would be great to be able to make the finals again, but there is a lot of hard work beforehand to get there," he said.

"The biggest strength of SunRisers Hyderabad is that we go about our jobs quietly and calmly. We're not like other teams because we don't show off or brag about ourselves. We just calmly play the game," Shreevats Goswami was quoted as saying by ESPNcricinfo.com.

### SRH Squad

David Warner (captain), Abhishek Sharma, Basil Thampi, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Jonny Bairstow, Kane Williamson, Manish Pandey, Mohammad Nabi, Rashid Khan, Sandeep Sharma, Shahbaz Nadeem, Shreevats Goswami, Siddharth Kaul, Khaleel Ahmed, T Natarajan, Vijay Shankar, Wriddhiman Saha, Abdul Samad, Jason Roy, Jason Holder, Priyam Garg, Virat Singh, Kedar Jadhav, Mujeeb ur Rehman, J Suchith.

Tom Moody (Director of Cricket), Trevor Baylis (Head coach), Brad Haddin (Assistant coach), V.V.S. Laxman (Batting mentor), Muttiah Muralitharan (Bowling mentor), Biju George (Fielding coach), Theo Kapakoulakis (Physio), Mario Villaveran (Physical trainer), S Chandrasekaran (Video analyst).



# Smooth sailing for Indians in Mussanah Open



OMAN

IT was smooth sailing for the Indians on the opening day of the Mussanah Open Championship 2021 at the Millennium Resort in Mussanah, Oman with many sailors placed between second and fourth positions in the last qualification round for this year's Tokyo Olympics from Asia and Africa.

In the Laser Radial category, in which two Olympic quota places are up for grabs, Harshita Tomar was placed in second place with six points behind South Korea's Jung Hyewon who is just a point ahead.

The top-ranked Indian in the fray, Nethra Kumanan, is placed fourth, despite getting a great start in Race 1 where she finished second behind Jung. But in the second race, Nethra, who became India's first World Cup medalist in 2019, finished seventh. She can still make up for the disappointing second race as there are eight more races to go followed by the medal race.

In the 49er category, the team of Ganapathy Kelapanda Chen-gappa and Varun Ashok Thakkar was placed fourth behind two Chinese and a South African team with 18 points after the first three races, while China are sitting comfortably on seven 7 points. Only one team can earn a Olympic quota in the category. The Mussanah Open provides

two Asian spots each in the Laser Radial and Laser Standard classes, while all other classes have one Asian spot for Tokyo.

In the 49er FX Class, the Indian pair of Ekta Yadav and Ritika Dangi finished the opening day placed third. The duo had an excellent third race where they finish on top but because of their unimpressive showing in the Race 1 and 2 they are currently third with eight points. China are leading the event followed closely by Thailand.

A total of 19 Indians are talking part in six qualifying events. **Indians' standings after Day 1 Laser Radial class:** 2. Harshita Tomar (6 points); 4. Nethra Kumanan (9 points); 7. Ramya Saravanan (16 points); 12. Jayalakshmi Sundaravadi (21 points). **Laser Standard class:** 4. Upamanyu Dutta (11 points); 7. Vishnu Saravanan (14 points); 12. Mohit Saini (23 points); 15. Ram Milan Yadav (29 points); 16. Gitesh (32 points).

**49erFX class:** 3. Ekta Yadav and Ritika Dangi (8 points).

**49er class:** 4. Ganapathy Chenn-gappa and Varun Thakkar (18 points); 11. Prince Noble and Manu Francis (26 points); 12. Sandip Jain and Munna Pandit (29 points).

**RS:X Women class:** 3. Ishwariya Ganesh (5 points)

**RS:X Men class:** 5. Ebad Ali (10 points); 11. Jerome Savarimuthu (20 points).

## Narang, Karmakar's coach Chakravarty passes away aged 79

NEW DELHI: Renowned rifle shooting coach Sanjay Chakravarty, who is credited with mentoring the likes of 2012 London Olympic Games bronze medalist Gagan Narang, and Olympians such as Joydeep Karmakar, Suma Shirur and Anjali Bhagwat in his career spanning more than four decades, passed away due to Covid-related complications on Saturday night in Mumbai. Chakravarty was 79.



The shooting community was plunged in grief on hearing the news, especially the Dronacharya awardee's pupils, who took to the social media to pay homage. "The grief of losing a real Dronacharya in Sanjay Sir. Our modern day Dronacharya who created not just one but many Arjuna (including me) and never asked for a Guru Dakshina! Indian Shooting has lost one of its pioneering doyens," tweeted Suma, who is currently the national rifle coach and working with shooters bound for this year's Tokyo Olympics.

"With a very heavy heart, we share the bad news of legendary coach Sri Sanjay Chakravarty's passing away a few hours ago in Mumbai. He was a Dronacharya awardee for shooting sports and has coached and mentored many stalwarts in Indian shooting. Earlier he battled cancer to be back with us again, but Covid 19 finally got him away from us. We at Indian Shooting Team convey our deepest condolences on his demise. An era gone," wrote Karmakar, who represented the country in 28 World Cups, two Commonwealth Games, the Asian Games and three World Championships, besides narrowly missing a medal at the 2012 London Olympics, losing in the shoot-off to finish fourth.

Though Chakravarty represented the country in quite a few international events, coaching was his true calling. (IANS)



Manu Bhaker

## Railways beat Jharkhand to win 13<sup>th</sup> women's ODI title

RAJKOT: A clinical bowling performance, coupled with half-centuries from Punam Raut and Sabbhineni Meghana, helped Mithali Raj-led Railways beat Jharkhand by seven wickets in the final of the Senior One-day Trophy and clinch the title on Sunday at the Saurashtra Cricket Stadium. Chasing a target of 168, Railways opener Nuzhat Parveen was run out before she could score a run. However, the in-form Punam and Meghana put up a 107-run stand for the second wicket to close any opportunity that Jharkhand may have seen due to the early breakthrough. Punam was the first to be dismissed, falling to Ravinder Devyani for 59 runs from 94 balls. Meghana fell shortly after to Devyani for a 67-ball 53. Mona Meshram and Sneha Rana then made sure that Railways crossed the line in 37 overs without losing any further wickets. Brief scores: Jharkhand 167 all out in 50 overs (Indrani Roy 49; Sneha Rana 3/33, Megha Singh 2/22) lost to Railways 167/3 in 37 overs (Punam Raut 59, Sabbhineni Meghana 53; Ravinder Devyani 2/36) by seven wickets with 78 balls remaining. (IANS)

## Miami Open: Barty wins title as injured Andreescu retires

MIAMI: World number one Ashleigh Barty of Australia took the Miami Open women's singles title as Bianca Andreescu of Canada had to retire in the second set of the final. Barty completed the 6-3, 4-0 victory after Andreescu was forced to retire in tears with an injury to her right ankle in the second set on Saturday, Xinhua news reports. "It's never the way you ever want to finish a match, particularly in a final," Barty said. Barty completed a tremendous turnaround from the start of the event. In her two-and-a-half-hour opening clash against Kristina Kucova of Slovakia, Barty needed to save a match point before staving off the challenge from the qualifier.

## Sania, Ankita hit the courts in Dubai ahead of Latvia tie

DUBAI: India's tennis ace Sania Mirza and Ankita Raina began their preparations for the Billie Jean King Cup, previously Fed Cup, tie against Latvia in Dubai in a bid to get back to peak fitness as quickly as possible for the two-day away contest on April 16-17. The duo will be working together for a week before boarding the flight to Latvia. This is the first time in history that the Indian women's tennis team has made it to the World Group play-offs. The pros will be leading a five-member team that includes Karman Kaur Thandi, the fast-improving Zeel Desai and Rutuja Bhosale. Last month, the AITA selection committee had selected the team, to be captained by Vishal Uppal.

## Bhaker to represent India in three events in Olympics, Elavenil included as Chinki misses out

NEW DELHI

WORLD number one Elavenil Valarivan was on Sunday included in a 15-member Indian shooting contingent for the Tokyo Olympics where the highly accomplished Manu Bhaker will represent the country in three events. However, Olympic quota winner Chinki Yadav could not make the main team despite winning a gold medal in the Delhi World Cup last month.

It was decided by the national selection committee that the quota won by Chinki in the women's 25m pistol would be swapped in favour of Anjum Moudgil, to enable her to compete in the women's 50m rifle 3 positions event as India's second entry alongside former world champion Tejaswini Sawant.

Reigning world number one in women's 10m air rifle, Elavenil, is the only member in the Olympic team to have not secured a quota for herself but performed consistently in the Olympic qualifying cycle, forcing the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) to include her in the women's 10m air rifle team in place of Moudgil.

To deal with the uncertainty caused by the pandemic, the NRAI named two reserves in each discipline where its shooters have won quota places. In the individual events, Bhaker

will be fielded in both the women's 25m pistol alongside the experienced Rahi Sarnobat and in her pet 10m air pistol event with Yashaswini Singh Deswal.

Besides, the 19-year-old Bhaker will partner with Saurabh Chaudhary in the 10m air pistol mixed event. The shooters were selected based on their performance in the NRAI's Olympic qualifying cycle, starting with the 2018 Jakarta Asian Games which was followed by World Championship (both in 2018), all four World Cups and Asian Championships in 2019 and selection trials stage 1 and 2 earlier this year.

As per the NRAI's stated policy, an average of five best scores in an international competition, starting with the Jakarta Asiad, was taken into account while picking the final team. Commenting on the team, NRAI president Raninder Singh said, "The main focus was to select the strongest squad for the Games and to ensure that the most consistent performers in each event, during the course of this entire Olympic cycle, do not miss out."

He added, "The selection I believe has been done purely on merit and in keeping with the provisions of NRAI's Olympic selection ranking policy." The quota belongs to the country and not the shooter who secures it.

**Team: 10m Air Rifle Men:** Divyansh Singh Panwar, Deepak Kumar Reserve Shooters: Sandeep Singh, Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar

**50m Rifle 3 Position Men:** Sanjeev Rajput, Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar Reserve Shooters: Swapnil Kusale, Chain Singh

**10m Air Pistol Men:** Saurabh Chaudhary, Abhishek Verma Reserve Shooters: Shahzar Rizvi, Om Prakash Mitharval

**10m Air Rifle Women:** Apurv Chandel, Elavenil Valarivan Reserve Shooters: Anjum Moudgil, Shreya Agrawal

**50m Rifle 3 Position Women:** Anjum Moudgil, Tejaswini Sawant Reserve Shooters: Sunidhi Chauhan, Gaayathri N

**10m Air Pistol Women:** Manu Bhaker, Yashaswini Singh Deswal Reserve Shooters: P. Shri Nivetha, Shweta Singh

**25m Sports Pistol Women:** Rahi Sarnobat, Manu Bhaker Reserve Shooters: Chinki Yadav, Abhidnya Patil

**Skeet Men:** Angadvir Singh Bajwa, Mairaj Ahmad Khan Reserve Shooters: Gurjoat Singh Khangura, Sheeraz Sheikh

**10m Air Rifle Mixed Team:** Divyansh Singh Panwar, Elavenil Valarivan Deepak Kumar, Anjum Moudgil

**10m Air Pistol Mixed Team:** Saurabh Chaudhary, Manu Bhaker Abhishek Verma, Yashaswini Singh Deswal. (PTI)



DUBAI

TOP Indian shuttlers, Pramod Bhagat, Sukant Kadam and Nitesh Kumar, had a memorable outing as they sailed into the finals of the singles and doubles events in their respective categories at the 3rd Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum Dubai Para Badminton International 2021.

On a day when the Indians assured themselves of a bagful of medals, reigning world champion Manasi Joshi, promising Palak Kohli and top seed Krishna Nagar too entered the final, while Prem Kumar Ale would be eyeing two gold medals, as he entered the men's doubles and mixed doubles finals.

In the men's singles SL3 final, Bhagat will take on compatriot Nitesh, who defeated fellow Indian Manoj Sarkar in a nail-biting contest 21-19, 22-20.

"I am very happy to start the season on a strong note. Game wise I am feeling the same as I didn't take any break from my training in the lockdown. I am going with the flow as I always do," Bhagat said after beating Malaysia's Muhammad Huzairi Abdul Malek 21-7, 21-17 in the semis.

A delighted Kadam, who thrashed German Marcel Adam

in the semi-finals 21-11, 21-11 and will take on Lucas Mazur in the title clash said, "I have worked a lot on my mental strength for important matches like these. I lost many semi-finals in 2019 and I am happy to start this year by entering the final. Looking forward to playing the final now," said Kadam who alongwith Nitesh entered the men's doubles SL3-SL4 defeating the Malaysian duo of Muhammad Huzairi Abdul Malek and Muhamad Zulfatih Jaafar 21-19, 19-21, 21-13.

In an all-Indian affair, Sukant and Nitesh will take on the Bhagat-Sarkar duo in the men's doubles SL3-SL4 final. Promising Palak Kohli overcame a tough Portuguese challenge from Beatriz Monteiro before winning 21-18, 21-15 to set up a women's singles SU 5 final against Megan Hollander of the Netherlands, while Krishna Nagar had an easy outing against France's Charles Noakes 21-14, 21-8 in the combined men's singles and women's singles SH6 category.

A total of 127 shuttlers from 29 countries, including hosts UAE, are competing in the BWF Para Badminton tournament after more than a year because of the Covid-enforced cancellations. (IANS)