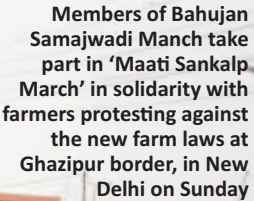


NEW DELHI

The Ahmedabad-Kevadia Jan Shatabdi Express, one of the eight trains, has been equipped with the 'Vista-dome tourist coach' which offers large viewing areas with rooftop glasses and seats for passengers.

NEW DELHI

During the hearing, the Supreme Court may take into account the matter of recusal of a member of the four-member panel set up by it to listen to the grievances and make recommendations to resolve the impasse. Bhupinder Singh Mann, president of BKU (Mann) and chairman of All India Kisan Coordination Committee had recused himself from the court-appointed panel two days after he was included in it, saying "I will always stand with my farmers and Punjab".



protesting farmer unions in which it has agreed to address their apprehensions regarding mandis and traders' registration among other things.

The NIA, a top investigating agency of the country, has summoned over two dozen people in a case related to an organisation called Sikhs for Justice, which advocates Sikh secessionism and is allegedly aiding the protesters.

G SRIDHAR
TIRUPATI

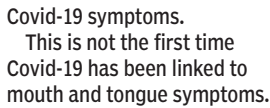
TTD officials, including vigilance personnel, later inspected the areas enquir-

The officials are also trying to find out if there was any slackness on the part of the TTD personnel.



Professor Tim Spector said in a tweet that he has seen an increase in such patients. "One in five people with Covid still present with less

There is no mention of oral symptoms listed either by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or the WHO.



His daughter-in-law, Namrata Gupta Khan said the veteran breathed his last at 12:37 pm. "This morning he was fine. We had a 24-hour nurse at home.

WASHINGTON

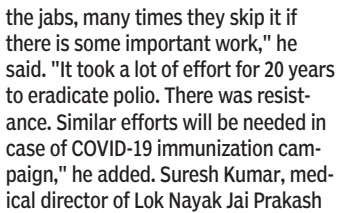
General. Vanita Gupta has been nominated as Associate Attorney General, Department of Justice, and on Saturday, Biden nominated a former foreign service official Uzra Zeya as the Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights.



NEW DELHI

Also, people in India adopt a 'wait and watch' approach in important matters, be it purchasing a new car or an appliance. People consider the experiences of others before taking a call," B L Sherwal, Medical Director of

"Since people are voluntarily taking



CoWin is an online platform for monitoring COVID-19 vaccine delivery. Only 32 people were given the jabs at LNJP hospital on Saturday.

"The government will have to strengthen the information dissemination process. The vaccine has reached the centres, now information needs to reach everyone," he said. People are also facing difficulty operating the CoWin app. Technical glitches need to be rectified quickly to make the process smooth, Ganguly said. Questions have also been raised on the efficacy of the vaccines, especially about Bharat Biotech's Covaxin.

Womenia



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Its just too tragic .. ever
smiling,ever helpful
#PistaDhakad
U will be missed



WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH CORD BLOOD



Pregnancy is certainly a special milestone and motherhood is one of the greatest adventures no doubt. Having a baby is an overwhelming time that often encourages parents to adopt healthier lifestyle choices and, if need be, strive towards healthy physique too. Most of us make a conscious decision in order to provide the best for their little one by keeping a tab on the nutrition consumption.

However, these are not the only critical changes that you will be making in the journey of motherhood. Along with healthy life/dietary changes, it is important to consider and make advanced decisions that ensure a safe, healthy future for your baby. One such decision that you might have to consider during your regular prenatal checkup is preserving your baby's cord blood. It is vital for pregnant women to consider and learn about the plethora of benefits cord blood preservation, which will benefit the baby in its future and also your extended family.

The umbilical cord connects mother and baby in the womb for nine months. It nourishes the baby and keeps it healthy, connected with the mom.

A truly special bond, umbilical cord has life-saving benefits. The cord carries three types of blood vessels – a vein that carries oxygen and food from placenta to the baby and two arteries that carry waste back to placenta. After the birth of the baby, the cord is clamped and cut along with the removal of pla-

Five myths about cord blood banking that is stopping you from securing the future of your baby

Myth: Cord blood is a medical waste that has no value:

A baby's umbilical cord contains blood-forming stem cells which be transplanted and rebuild the immune system and bone marrow by saving a patient life with a certain life-threatening condition such as leukemia, lymphoma or thalassemia. Infusion of these cells can also treat patients with inherited genetic disorders, bone marrow failure or inherited immune deficiency.

Myth - Cord Blood collection could hurt the baby:

As a parent, you might be concerned that your baby will be affected due to the extraction of these stem cell. But, it has been scientifically proven that collection of Cord Blood cells leaves zero possibility of causing hurt to the baby as it is collected right after birth from the baby's umbilical cord and placenta. These cord blood cells instead help your family to combat serious ailments like thalassemia, sickle cell disease, diabetes, leukemia and more.

Myth: There is no need for the prior decision of collecting cord blood:

Making an informed decision to store cord blood is not as clear-cut

for everyone and often people dwell in the misconception that decision with regards to the collection of cord blood can be made after-birth. However, expecting parents must consult their physician between 28th to 34th weeks of pregnancy regarding the preservation of cord blood. Although cord blood banking can be a very novel experience for expecting parents, it is a simple and safe one.

Myth – The collection process of cord blood affects delivery, takes blood away from the baby and is painful in general:

Cord blood collection happens post-delivery of the baby and when the umbilical cord is clamped and cut. Since it is carried out by a dedicated physician, it does not pose any risk to baby and does not affect the care of mother and child during the delivery itself. Cord blood collection process is a safe, painless process for both mother and the baby.

Myth - Cord blood is rarely used in medical treatments today:

To reiterate, cord blood stem cell transplants are used to treat nearly 80 and more diseases including blood cancer, autoimmune diseases and bone marrow disorder. The medical world is opening new frontiers to apply stem cell transplant to cure rare disorders across specialties and hold great future.

—Dr Pujitha Devi Suraneni,
Obstetrician & Gynecologist,
KIMS Cuddles

QUICK TIP

Blush for your face type

In order to apply blush where it will be most flattering on you, first determine your face shape. Blush not only adds colour, but also contours and defines your cheek bones. The way you apply your blush can accentuate your best features and also soften those that are perhaps too prominent.



PUJA GUPTA

Ageing of skin comprises of intrinsic and extrinsic factors. The intrinsic factors are genetic. The extrinsic factors include sun exposure, pollution, unhealthy diet, inadequate sleep, stress, lack of exercise, poor lifestyle, pollution and imbalance of hormones. Skin loses its firmness and elasticity due to these factors.

Cosmetic Dermatologists adopt various techniques to turn back the clock and make one look youthful. While a popular approach employs the technique of relaxing wrinkle causing muscles, other procedures work to lend more hydration to thinning skin or volume to sunken areas on the face. Effectively, they serve to address the overt signs of ageing. However, researchers and experts have continued to explore ways that can address more than just the symptoms of ageing and boost skin's regeneration ability at the root.

The Bio Aesthetic Points (BAP) technique, pioneered by dermo-

aesthetic major IBSA Derma, is one of the latest advancements in this direction, says Celebrity Cosmetic Dermatologist Dr. Jaishree Sharad. Dr Sharad is the only Indian to be Board of Director of the International Society of Dermatologic Surgery and aesthetic dermatology. However, before coming to this technique we need to understand the key role Hyaluronic acid plays in keeping skin youthful and how delivering it at strategic points into the multiple layers of the dermis achieves remarkable anti-ageing effects.

Hyaluronic acid: the potent anti-ageing weapon

Hyaluronic Acid (HA) is a substance found naturally in the skin. With its ability to retain water and its elasticity, HA plays a crucial role in maintaining hydration and volume of skin tissues and ensures the healthy existence of other structural proteins such as collagen and elastin. Age related depletion or degradation of skin's natural HA reserves are a major reason for the



appearance of wrinkles and fine lines on the skin, Dr Sharad, who has been practising in Mumbai for the past 20 years, points out.

"With aging, the ratio between different collagen types changes. Along with it, the skin's turnover rate also diminishes, resulting in lacklustre appearance and signs of ageing. The depletion of HA also results in physiological alterations of keratinocytes and fibroblasts – two crucial cell types that play a

pivotal role on skin regeneration. A healthy interplay between fibroblasts and keratinocytes enables the process of healing and regeneration of the epidermal barrier layer of the skin."

Hyaluronic acid therefore plays a central role in ensuring a healthy composition of skin components as well as a healthy skin regeneration response. This knowledge has led to HA becoming a key element of skincare and anti-ageing regimes

in recent years. From serums to topical skin creams to fillers and injectables, HA is today used in a multitude of skincare products. Its ability to induce lubrication and healthy inflammatory response also makes HA useful for wound healing and maintaining joint health.

BAP technique for skin bio-remodelling

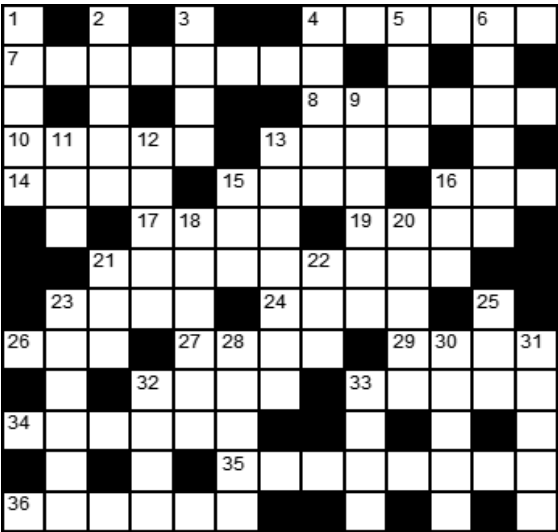
Dr Sharad, who authored the book 'Bestseller Skin Rules', says: "The technique called Bio Aesthetic Points (BAP) is specifically designed for Profhilo at the IBSA laboratories by a team of experts. While most HA-based dermal fillers use the Hyaluronic Acid to give hydration, volume to the skin and fill up lines & folds, IBSA Derma has taken its use a step ahead with its brand Profhilo that uses a skin bio-remodelling approach through the BAP technique."

The Bio Aesthetic Points (BAP) technique identifies 5 strategic points on facial skin to deliver intradermal injections of HA for best anti-ageing results. These 5 injection

points are anatomically receptive areas of the face with an absence of large vessels and nerve branches, therefore, minimizing the risks of any adverse effect and maximizing the diffusion of the product in the cheeks, she points out. "Profhilo can also be injected in the neck strategically to tighten the skin in the neck region. The BAP protocol includes two treatments one month apart."

Traditional bio stimulation shows several limitations including the need for many injections, greater patient discomfort, increased possibility of bruising, protocol requiring many treatment sessions, and greater time commitment for the patient. However, compared to this, the new BAP technique using new generation hyaluronic acid complexes achieves several advantages: only 5 injection sites per side of the face, reduced pain (slow injection), less chance of bruising and hematoma, fewer treatment sessions and better patient compliance, Dr Sharad says.

Bio-aesthetic points: A new approach to fight ageing



B U D D H A C R Y C
U E A S E A E N O L
N O M A D S G L U
D U J E W E L L E R Y
L Y R E G A Y A
E R E L A X C A D G E
B E L I P N E E
S U D S Y F A U N A A
F M E N A D A M
A F F L U E N C E H U
A A A A D I E U S
I L K S L O K I A E
O H I S E T U D E S

SOLUTION TO JANUARY 16

CROSSWORD

Across

- 4 Breaking or subjugating (6)
- 7 Supervisor (8)
- 8 Consented, said yes (6)
- 10 Husband (5)
- 13 Whiskies (4)
- 14 Box (4)
- 15 Mexican coin (4)
- 16 Last letter of the alphabet (3)
- 17 Encourage (4)
- 19 Crucifix (4)
- 21 Heroic daring (7-2)
- 23 Meditate (4)
- 24 Regretted (4)
- 26 Metal container used for frying (3)
- 27 Prayer conclusion (4)
- 29 Former spouses (4)
- 32 They beat kings (4)
- 33 Enlightened Buddhist (5)
- 34 Altitude (6)
- 35 Plumped for (8)
- 36 Angora fabric (6)

Down

- 1 Insects attracted by light or fire (5)

- 2 Australian diva (5)
- 3 Catch sight of (4)
- 4 Salvagers (5)
- 5 God of war (4)
- 6 Required (6)
- 9 Mr Harrison of The Beatles (6)
- 11 Counterparts of "downs" (3)
- 12 Scottish hillsides (5)
- 13 Withdraws or leaves (7)
- 15 Each (3)
- 16 Animal park (3)
- 18 Violation of trust (6)
- 20 Stranger (5)
- 21 Press for payment (3)
- 22 Religious sister (3)
- 23 Improvise (4,2)
- 25 Seed of a legume (3)
- 28 Measuring device (5)
- 30 Bantu language (5)
- 31 Small projects or nails ? (5)
- 32 Taj Mahal site (4)
- 33 Nerve fibre core (4)

SUDOKU

	9			4			7	6
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		6		2			8	4
3								1
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7			2	4				
5	4			3	8	1	2	
8	3		6				9	

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4	9	6	2	1	5	8	7	3
2	5	1	7	3	8	6	4	9
5	4	7	3	9	1	2	6	8
8	1	9	4	2	6	3	5	7
6	3	2	5	8	7	1	9	4

SOLUTION TO JANUARY 16

NEWS ROUNDUP

Hina Khan celebrates Sunday vibes

Actress Hina Khan is celebrating her Sunday with stunning pictures on social media.

Hina posted a string of pictures on Instagram. In the images, she is seen sitting on a balcony sipping on some champagne. In the background a picturesque view can be seen. A The actress looks stunning in fiery orange off shoulder short kaftan dress.

"Do what makes your Soul shinea Happy Sunday everyone," Hina captioned the image, which currently has 199K likes on the photo-sharing website.

Recently, Hina's show "Yeh Rishta Kya Kehlata Hai" completed 12 years. In the show, she was seen playing the title role of Akshara. In the past 12 years, she has walked the Cannes red carpet, been a reality TV star on Bigg Boss and Khatron Ke Khiladi, had her brush with Bollywood and has also cemented her status as one of the highest paid stars of the Indian television industry.



Ram Temple Trust received ₹100 crore donation, says Champat Rai

LUCKNOW

SHREE Ram Janmbhoomi Teerth Kshetra has received a donation around Rs100 crores, said General Secretary of Shri Ram Janmbhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust Champat Rai on Sunday.

While speaking to ANI, Rai said, "The data has not reached to the headquarters till now but we have got a report from our karyakartas, that they have received a donation for this noble cause."

The Shri Ram Janmbhoomi Teerth Kshetra trust is conducting a mass contact and contribution campaign for the construction of the grand temple in Ayodhya which began on Janu-



The Shri Ram Janmbhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust is conducting a mass contact and contribution campaign for the construction of the grand temple in Ayodhya which began on January 15 and will go on till February 27

ary 15 and will go on till February 27.

The Ram Janmbhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust was set

up in accordance with the Supreme Court verdict on November 9, 2021, for the construction of Ram temple at Ay-

odhya. In response to the questions raised regarding the donation made by the President of India Ram Nath Kovind for

the construction of Ram Temple, Rai said that there is nothing wrong with it.

"He is an Indian and soul of India is Ram. So anybody who is capable can make offers in this noble cause," he said.

President Ramnath Kovind on Friday donated Rs5,00,100 as a contribution towards the construction of Ram Temple in Uttar Pradesh's Ayodhya.

A Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) delegation including its International Working President Alok Kumar, RSS leader Kulbhushan Ahuja, the treasurer of Shri Ram Janmbhoomi Trust Govind Dev Giri and temple construction committee head Nripendra Mishra met President at the Rashtrapati Bhavan on January 15.

Cong leader in U'khand begins donation drive

NEW DELHI/DEHRADUN

AS the donation drive for the construction of a new Ram Temple at Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh got underway, former Uttarakhand Minister and Congress leader Navprabhat on Sunday appealed to the people to contribute money for the shrine's construction.

He said that he and his volunteers are going around to urge people to donate money for the temple construction. In a video statement, he said: "I appeal to the people to contribute money willingly to the volunteers. We will maintain a register on payments received and will hand over the total collection to the area SDM to be sent to the temple trust."

Champat Rai also informed that Ram temple construction has been started and it would be finished in-around 39 months, most likely before 2024.

According to the trust, the temple will be built by adhering to the country's ancient and

traditional construction techniques. It will also be built in a manner to sustain earthquakes, storms, and other natural calamities. Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Ayodhya on August 5 to attend the 'Bhoomi puja' at the Ram Janmbhoomi site.

Interfaith marriage triggers row in Raj

BIKANER

AN interfaith marriage here has led the Hindu woman's family to allege the alliance to be a case of "love jihad", prompting a Union minister to demand a law in Rajasthan against the alleged practice of marriage for religious conversion.

Union Minister of State for Agriculture Kailash Chaudhary demanded the law in the state despite the girl in a video statement on social media and to the police asserting that she married on her own accord and police too rejecting the allegation.

The controversy erupted after Bikaner resident Manish Dudi, 18, married 22-year-old Mukhtiyar Khan last month after a brief love affair, prompting the woman's family to issue a statement on social media, terming the alliance to be a case of "love jihad".

While the woman's father, in his video statement, sought the



community's help in the matter, her grandfather threatened that he would commit suicide with the entire family members if no justice is done to them.

The video statement by her family led the woman to issue a statement, asserting that she married the man on her own will on December 10 last year

and instead of her converting to the Islam, the man himself has converted to Hinduism.

She also reached the Naya Sahar police station on Saturday to give her statement to the police and sought protection from it.

The Bikaner police said it was not a case of "love Jihad" and both the youths have married as

per their own free will.

"The rumours are baseless and the district police appeals to ignore such rumours," Bikaner police tweeted along with the video message of the girl.

On the other hand, MoS for agriculture Kailash Chaudhary, who is a member of Lok Sabha from Rajasthan, said the matter of "love jihad" should be investigated properly.

"Such incidents are not good for social harmony. A law against love jihad should be enacted on the lines of Uttar Pradesh. The Bharatiya Janata Party stands with Bikaner's family and assures them that the BJP will enact a strong law in Rajasthan to prevent such incidents on coming to power in state in future," he tweeted.

The BJP-ruled Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh have brought in the stringent anti-conversion laws to tackle the alleged problem of "love jihad".

ATS raids 3 places in UP, 5 in Delhi in fraud case

LUCKNOW

THE UP Police's Anti-Terrorist Squad carried out search operations at three places in the state and five places in Delhi after financial fraud was detected in which transactions worth lakhs were done from banks in Delhi without using an ATM card, an official said on Sunday.

Inspector General of Police, ATS, G.K. Goswami said a new type of fraud was done by using mobile phones.

"It also surfaced that these numbers were being operated with fake identity cards," he said.

Officials said first searches were done in the state's Sambhal, Amroha and Moradabad, from where some incriminating documents were recovered.

Later, raids were carried out at five places in Delhi.

3,600 birds rescued in 2020: Delhi Fire Service

NEW DELHI

FIREFIGHTERS in the national capital rescued more than 3,600 birds between January-December last year, officials said on Sunday.

The maximum number of such cases were reported around Independence Day in August when people traditionally fly kites and the strings remain suspended on trees and poles creating a death trap for birds. According to data shared by the Delhi Fire Service (DFS), the firefighters in the national capital responded to 25,416 distress calls last year, of which 3,691 were for rescue of birds and 2,902 for animals.

The maximum distress calls were received in November (2,652), October (2,521) and August (2,466), the data showed. These calls were related to fire, building collapse, bird and animal rescue among various other assistance sought by different agencies.

According to data, August saw a rise in bird and animal rescue calls due to kites flown around Independence Day. "We received the highest number of calls seeking assistance for rescuing birds and animals in August last year.

We rescued 882 birds and 345 animals in the month of August alone," Garg said. "This is usually the trend seen during Independence day when most of the people indulge in flying kites and in many cases, we have observed that these birds get stuck or entangled on electric wire or a tree due to stray strings," he added.



According to the fire department, most of the rescue calls they received were for birds like crows, pigeons, parrots which either get stuck on electric wires or trees due to kite string. Or, they get calls related to cows, cattle, dogs or cats which get stuck inside narrow lanes, closed spaces, sometimes even inside houses, in a pit, canal or a drain.

The months of September and July too saw a high number of rescue operations. The firefighters rescued 458 birds and 248 animals in September and 335 birds and 258 animals in July, the data showed.

527 Covid+ delivered babies at LNJP since March 2020

KUNAL DUTT
NEW DELHI

MORE than 500 pregnant women have delivered babies while being treated for coronavirus infection at the Lok Nayak Jai Prakash Narayan Hospital (LNJP) in Delhi since March last year when it was declared a dedicated COVID-19 facility, officials said.

The national capital reported its first novel coronavirus case on March 1. After the viral infection began to spread, the LNJP Hospital in central Delhi was converted into a dedicated COVID-19 facility. It is now one of the 81 sites in Delhi chosen for the mega anti-coronavirus immunisation exercise that was launched on Saturday by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"We have treated COVID-19 positive expecting mothers and successfully carried out deliveries for hundreds of such patients," Medical Superintendent of the hospital Dr Suresh Kumar said. According to data shared by LNJP Hospital authorities, 10,851 patients have been successfully treated and discharged so far and

many more are nearing full recovery.

"Among the COVID-19 positive women, 527 have delivered babies at our hospital, of which 224 were through caesarean procedure. Besides, 1,986 COVID dialysis sessions have been conducted," a senior doctor said, quoting official data from the hospital. After rendering yeoman service for over nine months as a dedicated coronavirus facility, the 2,000-bed hospital and six other Delhi government-run facilities, were converted into partially COVID-19 hospitals.

The British-era hospital, which wit-



nessed a large number of COVID-19 deaths at the height of the pandemic and was the scene of numerous distressful stories of many families, wore a festive look on Saturday as a massive vaccination roll-out exercise kicked off across the country.

NGT to 'probe' gas leak incident at IFFCO plant

NEW DELHI

THE National Green Tribunal is scheduled to take cognizance of the ammonia gas leak incident at IFFCO plant at Phulpur near Allahabad in Uttar Pradesh on Monday.


A bench comprising NGT chairperson Justice A K Goel and Justice Sheo Kumar Singh had taken note of a Hindi newspaper report dated December 24, 2020. Two officials of the Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited (IFFCO) had died and its 16 other employees were injured in a major ammonia gas leak at the fertiliser major's plant at Phulpur.

The gas leakage that took place on December 22 at around 10:30 pm, however, was restricted and stopped in a short time, the fertiliser cooperative major had said in a statement. IFFCO Deputy Manager Abhay Nandan and Assistant Manager V P Singh died in the incident.

Out of the 16 injured IFFCO employees, including three contract labourers, two have been discharged, while 14 others are undergoing treatment in different hospitals, it said. IFFCO said

the accident took place as tie rods of an ammonia plunger pump suddenly broke and got detached leading to heavy ammonia leakage





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4 more Covid vaccines in different stages of trial: Serum Institute

NEW DELHI

APART from Covishield, the Serum Institute of India (SII) is working on four more vaccines against the novel coronavirus, according to Suresh Jadhav, executive director at one of the world's largest vaccine manufacturers.

Jadhav informed during a webinar that the firm has been working on five vaccines against the novel coronavirus, including the Covishield which got approval for emergency use roll-out for mass immunisation drive began on Saturday.

"For one (vaccine) we have received emergency approval, three others are in different stages of clinical studies while one is in the pre-clinical stage of the trial," he said.

The SII has partnered with Novavax Inc to manufacture its potential Covid-19 vaccine for India and other countries.

Under an agreement with the US

drug developer, the Pune based drug-maker will develop two hundred crore doses of Novavax's vaccine candidate annually. The drugmaker will also manufacture the antigen component of the vaccine.

The SII has also partnered with the US-based Codagenix to manufacture and supply its coronavirus vaccine.

The firm's first Covid vaccine is developed from the masterseed of AstraZeneca/Oxford University's vaccine against the disease.

It was approved by India's drug reg-

ulator on January 3 for emergency use authorization alongwith Bharat Biotech's Covaxin.

However, both the drugmakers are being criticised for less transparent data in their clinical trials and receiving the approvals without completing the due process of drug licencing.

Commenting on the criticism the vaccine manufacturers have been receiving for getting approvals without completing all the trials, Jadhav said that such chances have been taken earlier as well.

"It is not the only time when humanity has taken the chances. Four years back, there was an outbreak of Ebola in Africa and its vaccine by a Canadian pharmaceutical firm which had only completed the phase 1 and undergoing the phase 2 trial, was approved by the World Health Organization (WHO). The risk paid off and the vaccine helped in controlling the Ebola there," Jadhav added.

Sagar by-poll: Will Congress have the last laugh?

Political parties are warming up for the by-poll to Nagarjunasagar Assembly constituency which fell vacant following the death of TRS MLA Nomula Narsimhaiah on December 1. The ruling party seems to have changed its electoral strategy. It has decided to follow the adage, “enemy’s enemy is friend.” Analysts feel that there are only two options left before the party. One, win the seat or allow the Congress to win. In the 2018 Assembly elections, there were about 2.08 lakh voters in the constituency. It recorded a voter turnout of 85.98 per cent, with Narsimhaiah emerging victorious by a margin of 7,771 votes. While Narasimhaiah polled 83,655 votes, his rival Jana Reddy was in the second position with 75,884 votes. The BJP candidate K Niveditha Reddy was relegated to fourth place with only 2,675 votes. BJP leaders agree that the road ahead would be challenging for the party. Despite the impressive performance in

the recent Dubbaka and GHMC elections, in rural Telangana, the situation is far off from its favourable urban centres. The BJP feels that even if it does not win the Nagarjunasagar seat, it can considerably improve its vote share as farmers and other rural sections are dejected by the TRS. The BJP’s other strategies seem to include encouraging defections of leaders from other parties, especially in those rural areas where it has very limited presence. TRS president K Chandrasekhar Rao has directed the rank and file not to give too much importance to the BJP. He has also told them not to criticise the BJP but to focus on taking the developmental activities of the government to the people. The pink brigade has already started informal campaign. The government has released funds towards pending works pertaining to Nellikallu Lift Irrigation Scheme, Kunkuduchettu Thanda Lift Irrigation Scheme, special pipelines to Low Level Canal. Green signal has been given for establishment of a government degree college at Halia. Proposals to take up allocation of Nagarjunasagar Project quarters to locals in Nagarjunasagar Hill Colony and Pylon Colony is being examined. Among other developmental initiatives the TRS government had taken up are creating Nandikonda municipality for development of Nagarjunasagar town and upgrade Halia from major gram panchayat to municipality. A new mandal of Tirumalagiri was also created, and a civil judge court was sanctioned for Nidamanur. A mini

stadium is being constructed at Halia, and Rs 4 crore has been sanctioned for modernisation of Jalu canal constructed during the Kakatiya period. It also feels that the mark which Narsimhaiah left during his short stint by addressing several issues will result in the voters supporting the TRS. During the short stint of Narsimhaiah, TRS claims that there has been a perceptible change in the constituency. The only major issue the TRS has before it is to finalise the candidate. While there is no clarity on the probable candidates from the ruling TRS, the Yadav community had recently requested Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao to field a family member of Narsimhaiah for the seat. Energy Minister G Jagadish Reddy, Rajya Sabha member Badugula Lingaiah Yadav and other TRS leaders have initiated moves to gear up the party cadre for the by-election. The Congress on the other hand finalised the name of old warhorse and seven-time MLA K Jana Reddy. The Congress party feels that it is now or never kind of situation for them. If it loses this election also, then it means that the party has no future in the next general elections. Hence the party State unit has started focussing attention on this by election. Jana has launched his campaign much ahead of all other parties and has been going from door to door. Since they have a huge vote bank and with the possibility of TRS fielding a weak candidate, the Congress feels that it has a bright chance to win the polls.



Fight to avert one last execution on Trump’s watch

JONATHAN ALLEN

LAST Thursday evening, Dustin Higgs, 48, waited in a cell on death row at the federal prison in Terre Haute, Indiana, his scheduled execution less than 24 hours away.

A five-minute drive down the road, members of his legal team sat around a laminated plastic table in the lobby of a no-frills hotel off the interstate. Federal Defender Shawn Nolan sipped beer as he waited for his colleagues in Philadelphia to patch together the four or five points needed for a last-ditch court filing aimed at delaying Higgs’ execution by lethal injection.

If it went ahead, the federal execution would be the 13th and final one scheduled under US President Donald Trump. A few were performed before this administration — three since 1963, all in the early 2000s. Joe Biden, the president-elect to be sworn in within days, has said he will work with lawmakers in the Congress to end the death penalty.

Unshaven, wearing a slouchy green fleece jacket and a faded baseball cap, Nolan looked nothing like the suited figure from a year earlier, when he and a squadron of other death-row lawyers were challenging the government’s lethal-injection protocol in the grand federal courthouse in Washington DC. Although the litigation continues, the string of executions proceeded.

An email arrived from the Philadelphia office, with the legal filing attached. Nolan grabbed it at the sides of his laptop. “This brief is beautiful,” he said. “It’s tight, it’s right, it’s right on the law, it’s accurate. We should win.”

Nolan had toiled in the lobby for hours with three others at a table littered with snacks. Using their laptops and phones, the defence team jostled with federal lawyers, filing opposing briefs with the US Supreme Court. Higgs and an accomplice, Willis Haynes, were convicted at separate trials in the killing of three women on a US wildlife reserve in 1996: Tanji Jackson, 21; Tamika Black, 19, and Mishann Chinn, 23. Higgs invited the women over to a party in his apartment; then, after an argument, he and Haynes kidnapped them in his van. At a secluded part of the refuge, Higgs handed his gun to Haynes, ordering him to kill the women. Haynes was sentenced to life in prison, Higgs to death.

In a statement last year, the US Justice Department called the murders “staggeringly brutal.” Some of the victims’ relatives had travelled to Terre Haute for the execution. A sister of Jackson prepared a statement addressed to the killer, saying the women’s families had been left “heartbroken” by the murders.

Many of the people opposed to executions at the prison stay at the Terre Haute Marriott. Thursday was no different: Defence lawyers, protesters and family members all passed through its doors at various times, bumping into each other in the banal lobby with its busy green carpet and piped-in soft rock. Higgs’ sister wept there while talking to his spiritual adviser.

Later, Nolan got up from the lobby table as his phone rang. When the Supreme Court calls, it says, “No ID.” A court clerk wanted to know when Nolan might reply to a new government petition that could clear away one of the few remaining obstacles to Higgs’ execution.

Nolan believed his team’s best hope for a reprieve lay in a joint filing before the Supreme Court with Corey Johnson, a fellow death row inmate due to be executed that very night. Both men had been diagnosed in December with Covid-19. A lower court had agreed that they would likely experience the terror of drowning when pentobarbital, the barbiturate now used in most lethal injections, caused their lungs to fill with fluids. The lawyers wanted the Supreme Court to restore that order, overturned by an appeals court, arguing that the procedure would violate constitutional protections against cruel and unusual punishment.

As his colleagues left for bed, Nolan stayed back to clear up snack packets and beer cans. An email arrived at 9:50 p.m.: The Supreme Court had rejected all of the outstanding arguments by Johnson’s lawyers, including the joint filing with Higgs’ lawyers with the Covid-19 argument.

Nolan was silent for some time. “It doesn’t bode well,” he said. But Higgs still had another argument not yet decided by the Supreme Court. Nolan tried to summon some optimism. “We’ll keep up the fight tomorrow and see if we can get something good.”

That same night, a small group of activists who travelled to Terre Haute to protest every execution gathered on their usual spot by a convenience store parking lot near the turnoff to the prison gate. There they planted large signs saying, “execute justice not people” and other abolitionist slogans.

Some of the protesters, including Battista, have stood at the side of condemned prisoners in the execution chamber after becoming their spiritual advisers. Yusuf Nur, a 65-year-old business professor and trustee at the Islamic Centre of Bloomington, was with the protesters on Thursday, but was bracing himself to enter the execution chamber on Friday to support Higgs, who converted to Islam in prison, if the execution went ahead.

Beneath the tree, a hefty black metal bell sat on two columns of stacked plastic crates. It can be heard for two miles if struck right, Battista said. As an execution draws near and the white vans carrying witnesses turn toward the prison gates, they wait a bit and then take turns tolling the bell. “For me, I come here as another human, to not let the government take someone’s life without us being here,” Battista said.

A few hours later, across the road, Johnson was declared dead. Not long before Higgs’ scheduled execution time on Friday, Nur, who carried a small, scuffed Arabic Koran inside his brown blazer, stopped back at the hotel. That morning he had visited the inmate, their first in-person meeting Higgs after several phone calls and emails. “Everybody’s going to die,” Nur recalled telling Higgs. “But how many of us will know ahead of time when we’re going to die and reconcile ourselves with it, make peace with ourselves with others and with the Creator. Not everybody gets that chance.”

Higgs’ older sister, Alexa Cave, had also visited with him. She hadn’t had the money to visit before, although they had spoken by phone often over his two decades behind bars. Her trip this time, along with that of her 28-year-old son, was paid for through an online fundraiser.

“I forgot how tall my brother was, I really did,” she said. “I was just like, wow, he’s got grey in his beard now. I smiled so much my cheeks hurt.” She grimly observed that her brother, one of the disproportionately high number of Black men on death row, was due to die on Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday.

More than 40% of people on federal death row in the United States are Black, though Black people are about 13% of the population. “This is how it’s been since before I was born,” she said. She left to change, preparing to go back to the prison to await her brother’s fate. Her new outfit was cinched with a belt that spelled “L-O-V-E.”

Nolan also appeared in the lobby, his outfit the same as Thursday but his eyes much redder. It was about 10 minutes past Higgs’ scheduled execution time of 6 p.m. “It’s a slippery slope, when you get to the 13th execution in a space of 13,” he said. “But Dustin is still alive and we’re still in the game.”

About four hours later, the Supreme Court’s conservative majority set aside the last remaining stay. At the prison, the white vans carrying witnesses over to the execution chamber started their engines. Nolan completed a written statement that soon would be circulated to the media, decrying the 13 executions as “unprecedented slaughter.”

By the parking lot, Battista and the other protesters tolled their bell.

Maintain, raise MSP to protect rivers

THE WAY AHEAD



Dr Bharat Jhunjunwala

THE farmers are agitating for ensuring the continuation of Minimum Support Price (MSP) by legislation. One aspect of this demand is that they be assured of minimum remunerative prices for their produce. Another aspect is that MSP can become the instrument for saving our rivers.

According to the Consortium of the Indian Institutes of Technologies that made the Ganga River Basin Management Plan, the rivers are the best measure of the overall health of our environment. The condition of our land is reflected in the rivers through agricultural runoff. The river water will become poisonous if the land has become poisonous due to the use of pesticides. The same will happen if the air is polluted. Maintenance of the health of the river requires that it has sufficient water just as maintenance of the health of a human being requires that her body has sufficient blood.

There are two claimants to the river waters. The first claim is of the farmers who want the water for irrigation. The second claim is from the river herself and the fishermen, fish, turtles, aquatic vegetation, and the human beings who want to enjoy the beauty of the river and taking a dip in her waters. A river may be considered to be “alive” if she has enough water to provide for these uses. The government has to decide how much water may be given to the farmers and how much to the river, fishermen and turtles. The water allocated to the river is called environmental flows or e-flows for short. A number of studies have been made to assess the amount of e-flows that are required to keep the river alive. I will discuss these in relation to the Ganga although the same logic applies to all the rivers.

The International Water Management Institute (IWMI) based in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in which Government of India also has a stake, had suggested in 2006 that the rivers can be classified in various categories from “A” to “F,” that is, from the best to the worst. IWMI recommended that 67 percent e-flows must be released if the status of the Ganga River was A-class, 44 percent if the status was B-class and 29 percent if status was C-class and so on. It then classified the status of the Ganga in 2006 as C-class. Thus, 29 percent e-flows should be released even if the status was maintained as it were in 2006. However, the government has declared the Ganga as our National River in 2009. One would expect that we should raise her to A-class. In that case 67 percent water should be released as e-flows. The High Court at Allahabad, in a mat-

ter that was argued by senior advocate Arun Kumar Gupta co-author of this article, passed an order in 2011 that 50% of the water should be released from Narora into the main channel as e-flows. Then, the World Wildlife Fund recommended in 2012 that 47% of the water should be released from Bithoor located upstream of Kanpur. Then in the Consortium of Seven Indian Institutes of Technologies recommended that 55% e-flows should be released from the Pashulok Barrage at Rishikesh that diverts water to the Chilla hydropower project. The IITs had been asked by the Ministry of Environment to make a Ganga River Basin Management Plan. The IITs did not assess the amount of water to be released by the irrigation barrages in the plains. However, the Pashulok Barrage is located only 15 kilometres upstream from the Bhimgoda Irrigation Barrage at Haridwar. Therefore, we can take the recommendations for Pashulok Barrage to be applicable for Bhimgoda Barrage as well. Then an article published in the scientific journal Current Science published by the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru, suggested that 50 to 60 percent e-flows should be released as e-flows into the Yamuna River. The Ministry of Water Resources also issued a report in 2015 which supported the recommendations of IITs that 55% e-flows should be released.

Now comes the catch. The Ministry of Jal Shakti, which was earlier called Ministry of Water Resources, issued and Notification in October 2018 requiring the release of 36 cubic meters per second (cumecs) water from the Bhimgoda Barrage in the non-monsoon period and 57 cumecs in the monsoon period. For the downstream barrage at Bijoor, Narora and Kanpur, it stipulated the release of 24 to 48 cumecs water as e-flows. This works out to 6 percent or less of the water available at these locations. Thus, the Ministry has ignored order of the High Court which is still operative, and the numbers of the studies mentioned above and instead of requiring the release of about 50 percent e-flows, it has required the release of only 6 percent water. The Ministry has bent backwards to supply water to the farmers; and ignored the river herself and the fishermen, fish, turtles, aquatic vegetation, and the human beings who want to enjoy the beauty of and taking a dip in her waters.

We are confronted with a difficult trade-off between food security and environment. Our farmers are often misusing the canal water which is supplied to them on per-hectare land that is irrigated irrespective of the amount of water used. Therefore, they flood the fields more than what is necessary. The solution is that the farmers must be required to pay for the volume of the water that they use. This will lead them to use the water judiciously and ensure food our security with the use of much less water. However, volumetric pricing will lead to an increase in the cost



We are confronted with a difficult trade-off between food security and environment. Our farmers are often misusing the canal water which is supplied to them on per-hectare land that is irrigated irrespective of the amount of water used. Therefore, they flood the fields more than what is necessary. The solution is that the farmers must be required to pay for the volume of the water that they use. This will lead them to use the water judiciously and ensure food our security with the use of much less water. However, volumetric pricing will lead to an increase in the cost of production. This can be managed by making a proportionate increase in the Minimum Support Price. Then the farmer will have to pay more for the water, but he will get more money from the sale of the crop

of production. This can be managed by making a proportionate increase in the Minimum Support Price. Then the farmer will have to pay more for the water, but he will get more money from the sale of the crop.

The ultimate burden will fall on us the city-dwellers who buy food grains from the market. We will have to pay higher prices for the grains since the Minimum Support Price would have been increased. The choice before us is whether we want cheap grains, or we want living rivers. We the people have to take a decision what is it that we want. It seems to us that livelihood of the fishermen; life of fish, turtles and

aquatic vegetation; and the happiness of us human beings who want to enjoy the beauty of the river and taking a dip in her waters is far more important and the price of food grains. Therefore, the Ministry of Jal Shakti must not implement the High Court order for the release of 50 percent e-flows and follow the numbers of studies that point in that same direction. At the same time, the government must assess the burden of volumetric pricing of water on the farmers and raise MSP accordingly.

*(With inputs from Arun Kumar Gupta)
(The writer is formerly Professor of Economics at IIM, Bengaluru)*

Cultural nationalism is here to stay

KARTIKEYA SHARMA

ON Friday, when President Ramnath Kovind donated Rs 5 lakh in personal capacity for the construction of Ram Temple in Ayodhya to the trust, life came a full circle for the Indian Republic. In 1951, when Deputy Prime Minister Sardar Patel wanted the Somnath temple to be renovated by the Congress, it was opposed tooth and nail by Pandit Nehru, who wanted the new State to be at arm’s length from the renovation of the Somnath temple in Gujarat.

It led to a terse exchange of letters between Sardar Patel and India’s first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. The context was Somnath temple, but the fight was over the idea of India and how the State will deal with religion in future. Nehru wanted distance but many in the Congress felt that Hinduism cannot be dealt with the European model of separating the State and the church.

Today the national consensus based on French secularism has been replaced by cultural nationalism promoted by the RSS. The latter has moved to the political fringe and former has become mainstream.

Nehru did not participate in the renovation of the

temple. After Sardar Patel passed away, the matter was carried forward by another Cabinet Minister KM Munshi. Nehru was also opposed to President Rajendra Prasad attending the lingam installation ceremony which he eventually attended in 1951. Though money was raised from non-state actors by K M Munshi, but it was enough to raise temperatures within the Nehru government which had become very sensitive to the issue of religion. Despite Nehru’s objection Munshi and Rajendra Prasad ensured that they remained attached to the renovation project.

In fact, the first Lok Sabha elections were fought by the Congress on the issue of communalism and inter-religious harmony. The construction of Ram Temple has become synonymous with national pride. Instead of remaining a legal issue about ownership of a piece of land, it became a matter of faith in the 1980s.

Though the meeting between the President and the Trust was personal in nature, it is a reflection of how mainstream acceptance of nationalism has changed in India. It marks a move from Constitutional Nationalism to Cultural Nationalism where the state does not feel uncomfortable with religious ceremonies. In the 1950s, for the Hindu Right group Somnath was

symbol of a wounded Hindu pride as the temple was desecrated thrice over a period of 500 years.

The issue did not receive much traction because of Nehru’s leadership but all this changed in next 50 years especially after Balasaheb Deoras became the RSS chief. He pushed the VHP to make the Ram Temple a political agenda and the BJP ultimately had to adopt it as their political agenda during the Palampur Session in Himachal Pradesh. It is for this reason that LK Advani started his Rath Yatra from Somnath temple for the construction of Ram Temple in 1990s.

The Indian Constitution during the Emergency also saw the word secular added to its preamble but the matter remained contentious even then. The difference is that there exists public acceptance to the phrase ‘cultural-nationalism’ and change in mindset towards the relationship of the state with Hindu religion.

It also reflects the realignment of Hinduism with nationalism. Whether, India of the future resets the clock or not, for now cultural nationalism is here to stay. The relationship between State and Hinduism has s been further cemented through the process of judicial scrutiny and construction of the temple.

Top officials elated, say vaccination successful

- Over 90% public healthcare workers take Covid-19 vaccine jab
- The 2nd dose will be given after 28 days
- The antibodies will develop after 42 days giving full protection
- Only 20 beneficiaries showed mild reactions which is common

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

COVID-19 vaccine evoked over 90 per cent acceptance among the public healthcare workers in Telangana on the first day of the vaccination drive on Saturday, health officials said.

Over 90 per cent of the 4,200 targeted beneficiaries took the vaccine at 140 centres across 33 districts in the State.

The Director of Public Health, G Srinivas Rao said the rollout programme was completed successfully without any severe or serious reactions. Only 20 people had minor reactions, which were common with any vaccine.

At few places some healthcare workers refused to take vaccine



Directors of Institute of Preventive Medicine, Telangana Institute of Medical Sciences (TIMS), Government Chest Hospital and superintendents of some major hospitals in the State take the vaccine to be role models to the society and send the message that the vaccine is totally safe

Directors of Institute of Preventive Medicine, Telangana Institute of Medical Sciences (TIMS), Government Chest Hospital and superintendents of some major hospitals in the State took the vaccine to be role models to the society and send the message that the vaccine was totally safe.

Pointing out that the Covid deaths were more among those with co-morbidities, Reddy said the vaccine would enhance immunity. "Vaccine develops antibodies and even if there is Covid attack, our body can fight it."

The officials said the number of vaccination centres and beneficiaries would be increased from Monday. In seven to 10 days, all 1,213 centres would be active and each centre can vaccinate a maximum of 100 beneficiaries every day.

due to some doubts and apprehensions. "We will try to convince them. All healthcare workers will have to be vaccinated. In the coming days the workers in private institutions will also be covered," Srinivas Rao said.

He said all those taking vaccine should continue to follow Covid-19 norms like wearing face mask, maintaining social distancing and hand sanitisation as the first dose won't give full protection.

"The second dose will be given after 28 days but it's only after 42 days that antibodies will develop giving full protection," he said.

The Director of Medical Education, Ramesh Reddy, said, "The vaccination of over 90 per

cent beneficiaries was an indication of the acceptance of the vaccine. The number will increase further in coming days," he said. Reddy was among the top officials who took the vaccine jab on the first day. "Being administrator and professor, we want to send a message that this vaccine is safe and there is no need to have any apprehensions," he said and urged all his colleagues to come forward to take the vaccine.

Sharing his experience, the 59-year-old official said he got a sense of confidence after taking the vaccine. "A year ago, there were no medicines and were at a confused stage. Today we are confident that we can control Covid," he said.

TIRUPATI LS BYPOLL

TDP to blow poll bugle on Jan 21

V PRADEEP KUMAR
TIRUPATI

TIRUPATI Lok Sabha by-election has been generating much heat in all political parties for the past one month. The leaders of various political parties have been involved in chalking out their strategies to show their strength in this by-election.

The principal opposition TDP has been the first party to announce the candidate to contest the bypoll. It has finalised the candidature of former Union minister Panabaka Lakshmi as its candidate much earlier than others and has been finalising the plans to formally kick-start the campaign in the next 3-4 days.

The TDP has decided to launch 'Dharma Parirakshana Yatra' from Tirupati on January 21 for which the party State president K Atchannaidu will be reaching here on January 20 it-

- Party plans 'Dharma Parirakshana Yatra' with 70 vehicles in 700 villages in seven Assembly constituencies
- TDP State president K Atchannaidu will kick-start the campaign from the temple city
- The party to adopt a three-pronged campaign strategy

self. He will inaugurate the party office here and address a public meeting. The party will conduct Dharma Parirakshana Yatra in all the seven Assembly segments in the Parliamentary constituency purview among which three are in Chittoor district while the rest in Nellore district.

The party leaders and cadre will proceed in 70 vehicles and conduct 700 meetings in villages in these seven Assembly segments, said former MLA M Suguna and TDP Lok Sabha constituency president G Narasimha Yadav. The party has been adopting a three-pronged strategy for this by-election.

First of all, the party has been trying to garner Hindu votes and consolidate its vote bank. Secondly, it aims at countering the government which is implicating the cadres and to boost their morale and finally expose government failures, destructive governance, increasing tax and debt burden on the people while highlighting the development and welfare activities implemented by the TDP government.

Party supremo N Chandrababu Naidu held a video-conference with the party's Tirupati Lok Sabha constituency leaders on Saturday and gave directions to them on various issues. Ac-

cordingly, the party is going to expose that Tirupati has become the centre of red sanders smuggling which has gone rampant after the YSRCP government assumed power. The other religious propaganda in Tirumala, selling of endowment lands among other things have also come up during the video-conference.

The party coordination committee leaders like Somireddy Chandramohan Reddy, Beeda Ravichandra Yadav and others are trying to motivate the cadres for campaign by inducing a positive attitude in them towards their show of strength in the by-election.

Though the YSRCP was said to have finalised the candidature of physiotherapist Dr Guru Murthy as its candidate, official announcement is still awaited. BJP and Jana Sena have not yet decided on their candidate.

- Lashes out at Gautam Sawang for making 'baseless allegations' against the BJP activists
- Takes strong exception to the DGP alleging that some BJP activists are involved in attacks on temples at different places in the State
- The BJP leader demands clarification from CM Jagan over the statements made by the DGP
- Questions the motive behind the allegations made by the police chief
- Opines the YSRCP govt is keen on hurting the sentiments of Hindus

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VISAKHAPATNAM

BJP State president Somu Veerraju lashed out at Director General of Police (DGP) D Gautam Sawang for alleging that BJP leaders were involved in incidents of temple desecration in the State.

Addressing the media here on Sunday, the BJP leader demanded the removal of the DGP for making baseless allegations.

Somu Veerraju said the DGP is unfit for the post and demanded Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan



BJP State president Somu Veerraju speaking at a press conference in Visakhapatnam on Sunday

Reddy to respond to the allegations made by the DGP with immediate effect.

Terming it as an insult to the national party, Veerraju condemned the way the DGP booked false cases against the BJP leaders alleging their involvement in the temple attacks across the State. He questioned the motive behind the allegations made by the police chief.

Veerraju wondered why the police arrested Hindus while attacks were on Hindu temples. However, he pointed out, no action was taken against the chariot burning incident at Antarvedi, vandalism at Ram temple in Ramateertha, among other attacks in various temples. "But the police are swift enough to file cases against the BJP leaders," he said.

The BJP leader said the YSRCP government is keen on hurting the sentiments of the Hindus. Like enumerating temples' assets, he demanded that a similar survey should be carried out in churches and other Chris-

tian organisations across the State. Further, he mentioned that the BJP will take up a Statewide survey and submit a report to the Central government in this regard.

He wondered why the Chief Minister is paying salaries to the pastors. "Are they being paid for conversions? The government could not stop the attacks on temples in the State but is fast in filing cases against the TDP and BJP," he stated.

Veerraju said the State government should stop attacks on Hindutva. Later, the BJP State president along with party leader Kanna Lakshminarayana and other party senior leaders participated in a meeting. Taking stock of the current situation, they said, an action plan will be made to address various issues in the State.

Condemning attacks on temples, the BJP has planned to take out rallies from February 4. In Tirupati by-election, Veerraju said the BJP-Jana Sena alliance will make its presence felt.

161 new cases in 24 hrs

AMARAVATI

ANDHRA Pradesh reported 161 fresh Covid-19 cases, 251 recoveries and one death in 24 hours ending 9 am on Sunday.

Chittoor district reported the highest 52 cases while Kadapa logged zero in a day.

SPS Nellore district saw 80 patients getting cured and its active caseload falling below 200, a health department bulletin said.

In one week, a total of 243 patients had recovered from the infection in SPS Nellore district while only 39 new cases were added.

The district also did not report a single coronavirus fatality during the week, as per government data.

Only Krishna district now has 300 active cases, Guntur 280 and East Godavari 206 while the remaining 10 districts have less than 200 each. Of the 10, five have less than 100 active cases each, with Vizianagaram having the lowest 35. After 1.25 crore sample tests, the overall positive Covid-19 cases climbed to 8,85,985 at the rate of 7.04 per cent.

The total recoveries touched 8,76,949 and deaths 7,140, leaving 1,896 cases active, the bulletin said. In 24 hours, only Visakhapatnam reported one Covid-19 death, it said.

GUV PATS SCIENTISTS, DOCTORS FOR SUCCESSFUL LAUNCH OF VACCINATION

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

GOVERNOR Biswa Bhusan Harichandan congratulated the Indian scientists who are behind the successful development, manufacture and rollout of the two Covid-19 vaccines for country-wide launch on January 16. The Governor in a statement on Sunday said that the scientists with their untiring efforts have fulfilled the aspirations of the people of the country by making the vaccines available to people in a very short time. He also congratulated the officials of the Medical and Health and Family Welfare departments and doctors in the State for



Biswa Bhusan Harichandan

the successful conduct of State-wide corona vaccination programme in the first phase for the benefit of healthcare professionals and frontline workers as per guidelines of the Central government.

COVID-19

- Says the scientists with their untiring efforts have fulfilled the aspirations of the people of the country by making the vaccines available to people in a very short time

4 injured as activists of TDP, YSRCP clash with each other

LAND DISPUTE



Former TDP MLA B C Janardhan Reddy speaking to a victim who was injured in an attack at Koilakuntla Government General Hospital on Sunday

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KURNOOL

TENSE situation prevailed at Natlakothur village in Sanjamala mandal on Sunday evening.

Activists of the ruling YSR Congress and the Opposition TDP have attacked each other with sticks and other lethal weapons resulting in four people sustaining injuries. Of them, three belonged to TDP and one to the YSRCP.

All the injured were rushed to Koilakuntla government general hospital for treatment. The police have deployed a large number of police to prevent untoward incidents taking place at the village.

Koilakuntla Circle Inspector Subbarayudu told The Hans India that there was a land dispute between the family members of Chakali Pedda Pullaiah of TDP and YSRCP's Boya Narayana. With regard to the issue, members of both the families have picked up a ver-

bal argument and in no time it led to a violent clash between both the groups.

On learning about the clash, the relatives and supporters of both leaders began to clash with each other. In the incident, Peda Pullaiah and Boya Narayana sustained simple injuries. The police on learning about the incident rushed to the spot and took stock of the situation. The injured were immediately rushed to Koilakuntla government general hospital for treatment. Police picketing was set up at the village to ensure no untoward incident takes place. However, a case under relevant sections was filed on both parties and taken up investigation, added the Circle Inspector, Subbarayudu.

Former Banaganapalli MLA B C Janardhan Reddy on learning about the incident reached the hospital and spoke to the victims. Janardhan Reddy said that the party will always stand by them.

AKHILA PRIYA CASE

15 more arrested for Bowenpally kidnapping

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

IN a major breakthrough in the kidnapping case orchestrated by Akhila Priya, ex-tourism minister of AP, the city police arrested 15 more persons who were involved in the offence. Apart from the conspirators, the main role was of one, Madala Siddharth (29), an event manager who provided 15 men to Guntur Srinu for committing the offence.

According to police, the accused who were arrested earlier revealed the details about their associates and based on their confessions, the arrests were made on Sunday. Though the entire plan was sketched by Akhila Priya, Bhargav Ram and Guntur Srinu, in order to execute the plan the men were provided by Madala Siddharth, an event manager who helped the masterminds by providing men.

Once the plan was finalized by the trio Akhila Priya, Bhargav Ram and Guntur Srinu, the latter approached Siddharth and sought his help in seeking men while promising him to pay Rs 5 lakh and Rs. 25,000 to each man. He also paid Rs 74,000 at various occasions to Siddharth, said Anjani Kumar, Hyderabad Police Commissioner.

He noted, "The accused Guntur Srinu also arranged a lodge for all the men in KPHB and took physical measurements of all of them



to secure formal clothes and all of them were briefed about their roles. Devarkonda Krishna Sai, Devarkonda Krishna Vamshi, D Nagaraju, B Sai, K Shiva Prasad, M Srinu, A Prakash, Shaikh Dawood, were given the uniform of police constables and they were instructed to lock up all the family members in a room, while others acted as IT officials."

"Apart from it, Bhargav Ram through Mallikarjun Reddy and Sampath got 10 stamp papers - Rs 5 each in the name of Bhargav Ram and Vikyath Reddy, Guntur Srinu along with Sampath and Mallikarjun Reddy went to a mobile shop to buy 06 basic mobile phones. Later, they bought toy pistols, rope and plasters which were used in the offence. Also, fake number plates were printed on a paper at a xerox shop and pasted on the number plates of the vehicles," stated the Commissioner.

He explained, "In furtherance of their plan, on January 5 in the evening at about 4 pm all the ac-

cused persons assembled at MGH School in Yousufguda, where they were briefed by Bhargav Ram about the execution of their plan by exposing themselves as IT officials and police officers and later on, they moved on to commit the offence. After kidnapping Praveen Rao and his brothers, they took them to the guest house of Bhargav Ram at Moinabad and forced them to sign documents. However, as they realized that they were being chased by police, they left the brothers."

Praveen Rao, an ex-badminton player and his brothers were kidnapped by henchmen of Akhila Priya on January 5 as there was an ongoing dispute related to Hafeezpet lands between the families. Though Akhila Priya was arrested the next day from her residence, the hunt is still on for her husband Bhargav Ram and Guntur Srinu and in this process many others who have participated in the crime have been arrested by the police.

Somu Veerraju demands sacking of DGP Sawang

'Book cases against those involved in illegal mining'

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NELLORE

FORMER Minister and TDP politburo member Somireddy Chandramohan Reddy demanded that the district administration book cases against people who were involved in illegal mining and sought stringent action against the mafia.

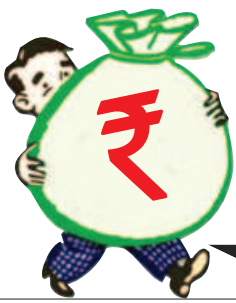
In a press release on Sunday, Somireddy pointed out earlier Venkatachalam mandal had been selected under the Centre's R-urban scheme following the efforts put in by the present Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu as Union Minister earlier.

He said Venkaiah Naidu had brought many prestigious Central government institutions to Venkatachalam which is part of Sarvepalli constituency.



Some people don't like change, but you need to embrace change if the alternative is disaster

- Elon Musk



HANS INVEST

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THE HANS INDIA
DELHI MONDAY 18 JANUARY 2021

IN SHORT

Sebi clarifies on MFs' ETCDs

Markets regulator Sebi provided clarity on cumulative gross exposure taken by mutual funds on exchange-traded commodity derivatives (ETCDs). The regulator in May 2019 permitted mutual funds to participate in ETCDs. In a circular, Sebi said that the short positions that are not exceeding the holding value of underlying goods received in physical settlement contracts would not be considered in the cumulative gross exposure taken by mutual funds on ETCDs. It added that short positions not exceeding the long position on the same goods will also not be considered.

Forex reserves up by \$758 mn

The country's foreign exchange reserves rose by \$758 million to reach a record high of \$586.082 billion in the week ended January 8, RBI data showed. In the previous week ended January 1, the reserves had increased by \$4.483 billion to \$585.324 billion. In the reporting week, foreign currency assets (FCAs), a major component of the overall reserves, rose by \$150 million to \$541.791 billion. Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves. The gold reserves climbed by \$568 million to \$37.594 billion, weekly data by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) showed.

Markets pin high hopes on Union Budget

CHERUKURI KUTUMBA RAO

Markets extended gains for third consecutive week but failed to sustain the momentum seen during the early part of the week and witnessed too much volatility in the week ended. The Nifty and the Sensex ended the week at 14,434 and 49,035, up 87 points and 252 points respectively. Broader markets took a breather after recent sharp up move, with both the Nifty Midcap and Small cap dropping 1 per cent and 0.5 per cent, respectively.

Sectorally, auto, IT, FMCG and PSU banks outshone while metal and pharma relatively underperformed. Focussed on US stimulus news and weak global cues; good Q3 earnings failed to enthrall the markets. Markets have started focusing on the Budget expectations ahead of Union Budget 2021-2022, which is scheduled to be presented by the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on February 1.

Market players feel the rotational buying or selling in sectors could be seen in coming two weeks. Majority of analysts feel the government may largely focus on infrastructure, manufacturing and healthcare segments, and segments where the maximum jobs creation can happen going ahead, along with fiscal consolidation path.

The FII inflows continued to be strong in January as well, as they have net bought more than Rs 17,000 crore of shares so far in the current month, in addition to over Rs 1.6 lakh crore of buying in previous year. However,

on the other hand, DIIs led by LIC continued their selling in equities for fourth consecutive month. They net sold more than Rs 12,000 crore of shares in January till date.

Important companies announcing their quarterly earnings in the coming week are Reliance Industries, Bajaj Finserv, Bajaj Finance, Bajaj Auto, Asian Paints, Larsen & Toubro Info, Federal Bank, HDFC AMC, Bandhan Bank, Biocon, SBI Card, Gland Pharma and Ultratech Cement.

Reliance Industries will announce its earnings Q3 earnings on January 22. The key focus would remain on its telecom and retail businesses, while the sequential performance is expected to be strong with ARPU at Rs 149, gross refining margin around \$7 a barrel and improvement in petrochemical margins.

Heard on the street

The Union Budget for 2021-22 is likely to be tabled in Parliament on February 1, 2021.

This Budget will be interesting to watch on how Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman plans to reboot the Indian economy already battered by Covid-19. FM has raised expectations hugely by saying that this will be a Budget of 'one in hundred years'. She also said the forthcoming Budget will sustain the momentum of public spending on infrastructure and have a 'vibrancy' to ensure the economic revival continues and that the pace of divestment will soon pick up in the coming months.

Health would take top priority going forward as the government

MARKET Khabrein

would look to provide not just buildings for hospitals but the technology and infrastructure apart from improving the availability of doctors and nurses to service the industry. Emphasis on digitisation to make India a dominant global player in the fintech industry is on cards.

However, it is pertinent to recall that the Nifty 50 Index clocked its worst Budget-day returns in at least 11 years after the Union Budget 2020-21 failed to impress investors.

From the Indian share market perspective, the last seven years have been mixed under the Narendra Modi-led government. Ahead of the Budget fortnight markets have turned jittery on concerns over high valuation of frontline stocks. Also, strong buying that emerged in the smallcap and midcap space has slowed down. Institutions and brokerage houses have trimmed FY20-21 economic growth forecast for India to between 7.5 and 9 per cent, which is multi-decadal low. But the market is pinning strong on the hopes on the Union Budget 2021, expecting that the Finance Minister will play her magic wand and try and bring about a sustained turnaround in the economy. If the Budget does not meet the high expectations,

which historically it rarely has, the market can see a sharp selloff post Budget.

Futures & Options/sector watch

Amidst heightened volatility derivative segment witnessed robust volumes. Technical indicators suggest that markets are now likely to witness intraday volatility in upcoming sessions as well, as traders would wait for upcoming Union Budget for any fresh



triggers. In the option segment, Call writing was seen at 14,500 and 14,600 strikes and also most of out of the money strikes. The maximum open interest is placed at 14,600 strike which will act as a major resistance for the coming week. Fresh addition of Puts was seen at 14,000, 14,200, and 14,300 strikes.

It is known fact that RBI has been fighting the new normal (pandemic times) with excessive liquidity. Indications are that draining of this excess liquidity would happen on a gradual basis. Ahead of Budget, speculation is rife on disinvestment and consolidation of PSU Banks. Use corrections to buy SBI, BOB and Canara Bank. Insurance sector is attracting good delivery buying from funds. There are not many listed players in the insurance space and in challenging

How to invest is the next big thing



K Naresh Kumar

I've been repetitively utilising this space to reiterate that investing requires loads of discipline and immense patience to succeed, thus often characterising the entire investment process to be boring. Of course, I've argued that while sticking to the traditional form of investing, one could also be imaginative in exploring newer options and that could be categorised into a satellite portfolio where one could turn into more opportunistic and adventurous at times. While that borders on trading than investing, particularly if the asset concerned is equities, it could also become their petri dish to try out emerging businesses that could at a later point migrate to the core portfolio.

The world is changing at a faster pace and last year's pandemic only quickened that transformation. The convergence of technologies was discussed over two decades earlier when ICE (information, communication, entertainment) ruled the roost in the peak of dot-com boom. Convergence probably has never been more relevant than now and also is turning viable. Though, many of the emerging technologies have not yet become

Thematic investing helps in participating in transformations that are underway

mainstream and are still at the fringes, the quantum of possibilities is unlimited. The new vision is evident when viewed through the eyes of those shaping it.

If computing revolutionised the way we work in the 80's, smart phones transformed the way we led our lives and those who had invested in these technologies reaped benefits. India skipped the manufacturing to become a service-dominant economy in the '90s while it also hopped out the traditional migration of users in banking from physical to cards by piggy riding the digital changes. It's not just investors or users but businesses, which adapt to these alterations by adopting technologies, have triumphed. While many of the essential activities remained the same, the way technology enables higher productivities and efficiencies is what needs to be observed. And investors who identified such companies to participate in their journey have benefited exponentially. That's why one shouldn't view any technology in a stand-alone way but in tandem with the other peripheral technologies. Hence, convergence is critical.

For instance, when Microsoft launched Tablet PC at the beginning of this millennia, it was still bulky, heavy and also had to live with the legacy infrastructure at



that time. Internet was still at nascent stage, Wi-Fi technology hasn't evolved and had to carry the PC architecture (CD ROM etc). But, by the time Apple introduced about a decade later, it needn't bother about such things and didn't require the legacy architecture as much of the enablers have evolved. We know how it created a new product category and its success is history.

Similarly, the current evolving technologies of quantum computing, biological engineering, 5th Generation (5G) mobile network (about 20 times faster than 4G LTE) to experience a higher mode of communication, artificial intelligence and machine learning capabilities across multiple fields (from pattern recognition to autonomous vehicles), 3D printing of materials, home to even organs, electric and mobility by reduced use of fossil fuels to protect and enhance the perishing environment and space exploration (reusable rockets, low-earth orbit satellites) to put human settlements beyond the Earth.

The current bull market in equities and especially among the technology-based stocks is based on this rationale. These changes are not going to happen in a day, month or even a year but over a multi-year compounding of smaller advancements and adaptations.

For instance, fintech (technology-enabled finance) has helped reach the traditional banking services (lending, deposits etc) in a larger way and hence created their imprint on the societal impact they have along with the digital payments. Also, they've complemented the e-commerce industry specifically during the pandemic to ensure our lives remained near to the normal along with the logistics providers have received attention from the investors. Then there's, of course, the advent of blockchain technology and cryptos, which are gaining further acceptance among the speculators and investors alike.

While sticking to the secondary market investing, one needs to explore new perspectives from these aspects to recognise companies which are involved in such activities. Thematic investing helps in participating in these transformations that are underway which enrich customer interactions and service experience that could become the next big thing.

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

Trade with limited position size till general Budget

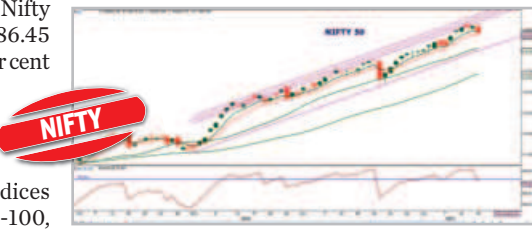
Stay cautious and watch for price action for next two weeks

THOVITI BRAHMACHARY

The Indian stock market continued the positive movement during the last week. It closed at another new high on a weekly basis, and it hit a new all-time high on the first three trading sessions. With a highly volatile session on Friday, the Nifty lost over a per cent. With this fall, it closed below the weekly opening after seven positive closings. On a net basis, the Nifty advanced by 86.45 points or 0.60 per cent last week. The BSE Sensex also gained by 0.5 per cent. The broader indices Nifty Midcap-100, Smallcap-100 declined by 1.2 per cent and 0.6 per cent respectively. On the sectoral front, Nifty PSU Bank gained by 5.9 per cent and Auto index up by 4.5 per cent. Nifty Metal index is down by 2.3 per cent and Pharma index declined by 1.9 per cent. The FIIs bought Rs 16,901 crore and the DIIs sold Rs 12,323.26 crore worth of equities during the current month.

The Nifty extended its weekly gain but, it has given a weakening signal by forming a bearish candle. After eight weeks it closed below the weekly opening. The last two days of price action during the last week suggests that the market is entering into consolidation before the general Budget. It formed a candle similar to a gravestone doji or a shooting

star. Any negative opening will give a directional bias to the bears. One important observation is that, during the last week, the trading ranges have shrunk and the low volume indicates the rally's tiredness. It registered a distribution day, as the Nifty fell by over one per cent on higher volume than the previous day. Now the distribution count is three, and any increase in the count will change the market direction.



Though it is trading 2.62 per cent above the 20DMA, the distance is cutting down as the Nifty entered the consolidation for the last two days.

It closed below the very short term 5EMA after 23rd December. Moreover, it is started trending down. This is the first sign of weakness in the index. At the same time, it also breached the 8EMA support on an intraday basis. A close below this level and a cross under these two indicators will have an impact on the trend. The 20DMA support is placed at 14064. The channel support is at the same price points.

The RSI remains in overbought conditions on weekly and daily charts. On the daily chart, it sharply down by 10 points to the

70 line. The MACD histogram suggests that the bullish momentum has clearly declined. Even the negative movement indicator -DMI is started rising. Three lower high candles also an indication of exhaustion. Only above 14618-14654 zone of resistance the market resume its uptrend.

The US Dollar was looking weak as the new president's stimulus package announcement. This may result in the continuation of the FII flows into the Indian and emerging markets as well. Interestingly the India VIX has risen by over 16 per cent and closed above 24. As earlier mentioned, any move above 24-25 zone is an indication of high volatile days. As we are trading near 40 PE zone, the market is clearly overextended its rally technically, and it is overvalued fundamentally.

Stay cautious and trade with limited position size till the general Budget. The General Budget may act as the trigger point for the market near future. The earnings are mostly in line and showing a very limited impact on the market as they are already discounted. There are only nine trading sessions before the Budget. Watch for price action for the next two weeks, and any increase in volatility may cause the traders profitability.

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

DERIVATIVES OUTLOOK

DASARI SREENIVASA RAO

As the BSE Sensex closing in on the historical 50,000 mark, which is just a few sessions away, the market seems to be taking support levels, while scattered concentration of Open Interest (OI) on Put side is indicating volatility and uncertainty on upward move. The resistance level for the last week just moved up by 100 points from the previous 14,500 strike, while the support level notched up by 400 points to 14,600 points. From the options space, the 14,600 Call strike has the highest Call base, which is also the last week high for the index. Analysts advise investors to monitor FII activity as the buying

Options data indicates building up of support levels for Nifty

Nifty VIX at 23.03%; Put-Call ratio of OI at 1.69 indicates more Put writing; Sustainability at current levels can be considered as a sign of caution

volume declined gradually in the last couple of weeks, while expecting some consolidation in the on-going result season.

On downsides, ATM 14,500 strike still holds noteworthy Open Interest despite Nifty trading below these levels. Sustainability below 14,500 might push the index towards 14,200 points in the coming sessions, observe derivatives analysts.

Dhirender Singh Bisht, senior research analyst (derivatives) at SMC Global Securities Ltd, said: "After huge volatile moves, Indian markets managed to end the week on positive note once again. Nifty indices ended the week above the 14,400 level, while Bank Nifty also

closed with gains of nearly half a per cent week-on-week. Traders were seen booking profits at higher levels ahead of the weekend as major IT, banking and financials witnessed selling pressure in the later part of the week."

As per the ICICI Direct.com data, on the back of this activity, 800 points OTM option is commanding a premium of 150 points, which is 25 per cent higher than normal days. This would give opportunity to option writers and as the week will progress, more writing could be seen in OTM strike Puts.

The 14,600 strike, which also witnessed maximum Call OI addition of 22.07 lakh contracts, has highest Call OI of 39.49 lakh con-

F&O TRADING			
Product	Contracts	Turnover (Rs/cr)	Premium (Rs/cr)
Index Futures	4,11,549	38,891.62	--
Stock Futures	9,20,211	82,647.95	--
Index Options	2,09,97,097	19,72,045.30	13,048.03
Stock Options	19,55,065	1,82,212.06	4,701.74
F&O Total	2,42,83,922	22,75,796.93	17,749.77

tracts followed by 15,000 strike with 33.49 lakh contracts, 14,700 strike with 29.02 lakh contracts, 14,500 strike with 28 lakh contracts and 14,800 strike with 26.98 lakh contracts. Further, the 14,500/14,700/14,800/15,000/15,300 strikes recorded reasonable build-up of Call OI.

Coming to Put side, the 14,500 strike has highest Put OI addition

of 17.43 lakh contracts followed by 13,500 strike with 15.46 lakh contracts, 14,200 strike with 14.56 lakh contracts, 13,800 strike with 13.99 lakh contracts and 14,300 strike with 13 lakh contracts. 13,700/14,200/ 14,000 strikes recorded a modest addition of Put OI.

From the derivatives front, Call writers added hefty Open Interest

at 14,600 strike, while Put unwinding was observed at 14,500 strike. The Implied Volatility (IV) of Calls closed at 18.37 per cent, while that for Put options closed at 19.23. The Nifty VIX for the week closed at 23.03 per cent. PCR of OI for the week closed at 1.69 and it indicates more Put writing than Calls," remarked Bisht.

For the week ended January 16, 2021, BSE Sensex closed at 49,034.67 points, a gain of 252.16 points or 0.51 per cent, as against 48,782.51 points. NSE Nifty moved up by 86.45 points or 0.60 per cent and closed at 14,433.70 points from 14,347.25 points.

"Technical indicators suggest that markets are now likely to

witness intraday volatility in upcoming sessions as well, as traders would wait for the upcoming union budget for any fresh triggers. However, we believe that the market stance is likely to remain in favour of bulls as far Nifty is holding above the 14,000 zone. Traders are advised to keep stock-specific moves on radar," forecasts Bisht.

Bank Nifty

The NSE's banking index Bank Nifty closed at 32,246.80 points, a net gain of 162.60 points or 0.50 per cent from 32,084.20 points. Sectorally, banking stocks should be in focus as heavyweights from the sector will be announcing results next week. For Bank Nifty, the Put base is 32,000 level and recorded fresh buying interest. The banking index on Friday reversed sharply in the second half from the lower level.



Thakur-Sundar rearguard keeps India in the game

BRISBANE

A brilliant batting partnership between Shardul Thakur and Washington Sundar on Sunday made sure India remained in the game after the end of Day Three of the fourth and final Test against Australia at The Gabba.

Thakur and Sundar shared a 123-run partnership for the seventh wicket which helped India concede a lead of just 33, which at one stage looked like to be in excess of 150.

India got bundled out for 336 in their first innings, riding on brilliant, maiden half centuries from the two young bowlers.

Australia, who had scored 369 in their first innings, then ended the day reaching 21/0 in their second innings. Openers David Warner and Marcus Harris remained unbeaten on 20 and 1 respectively, helping Australia swell their lead to 54.

Earlier, Resuming the day at 62/2, India lost Cheteshwar Pujara and skipper Ajinkya Rahane in the morning session. Pujara was the first to go as he edged one to wicketkeeper Tim Paine off the bowling of Josh Hazlewood for 25 with the team's score on 105.

Rahane followed, edging one to fourth slip off Mitchell Starc for 37 with the team score on 144.

Mayank Agarwal and Rishabh Pant added 17 more runs before Agarwal got out at team's score of 161. Agarwal scored 38 runs, with the help of three fours and a six, in the 75 balls he faced during the course of his innings.

Pant (23) then shared a 25-run partnership with Sundar before he became the third scalp of Hazlewood who had the India

wicketkeeper-batsman caught at gully by Cameron Green.

It was then that Thakur and Sundar stitched together the highest seventh-wicket partnership for India at The Gabba and brought the visitors right into the match. Both batted with great grit and determination as they didn't allow Australia to take any further wickets and also made sure that the runs kept coming for India at a decent rate.

Thakur scored 67 runs, with the help of nine boundaries and two sixes during the course of his innings, before he got out bowled by Pat Cummins in the final session. Sundar then registered the highest individual score for a debutant batting at number seven in Australia as he scored valuable 62 runs before getting out caught at gully.

Kapil Dev and Manoj Prabhakar had earlier held the record of the highest seventh-wicket partnership for India in Brisbane, scoring 58 runs in 1991.

"Outstanding application and belief by Washington Sundar and Shardul Thakur. This is what Test cricket is all about.

Washy top composure on debut and tula parat maanla re Thakur," tweeted regular skipper Virat Kohli while praising the duo.

Mohammed Siraj, Navdeep Saini and debutant T Natarajan then contributed with 13, five and 1 respectively as India got all out for 336.

For Australia, Hazlewood was the pick of the bowlers as he scalped five wickets while conceding 57 runs. Cummins and Starc picked two wickets each while off-spinner Nathan Lyon, playing his 100th Test, scalped one wicket.

Australia then batted for six overs before the Stumps as they swelled their lead to over 50 with two days play still remaining in the match. (IANS)

India's Washington Sundar ducks to avoid a bouncer during play on day three of the fourth Test against Australia at the Gabba, Brisbane, Australia on Sunday

SCOREBOARD DAY 3

Australia 1st innings: 369 all out

India 1st innings: (Overnight 62/2)

Rohit Sharma c Starc b N Lyon -----44
Shubhman Gill c Smith b P Cummins -----7
Pujara c Paine b J Hazlewood -----25
Ajinkya Rahane c Wade b M Starc-----37
M Agarwal c Smith b J Hazlewood -----38
Rishabh Pant c Green b J Hazlewood -----23
Washington Sundar c Green b M Starc-----62
Shardul Thakur b P Cummins-----67
Navdeep Saini c Smith b J Hazlewood -----5
Mohammed Siraj b J Hazlewood-----13
T Natarajan not out -----1
Extras: (B-5, LB-7 NB-2) -----14
Total: (all out in 111.4 overs)-----336

Fall of wickets: 1-11, 2-60, 3-105, 4-144, 5-161, 6-186, 7-309, 8-320, 9-328

Bowling: Mitchell Starc 23-3-88-2, Josh Hazlewood 24.4-6-57-5, Pat Cummins 27-5-94-2, Cameron Green 8-1-20-0, Nathan Lyon 28-9-65-1, Marnus Labuschagne 1-1-0-0.

Australia 2nd innings:

Marcus Harris batting -----1
David Warner batting -----20
Total (For no loss in 6 overs) -----21

Bowling: Mohammed Siraj 2-1-12-0, T Natarajan 3-0-6-0, Washington Sundar 1-0-3-0.

Paine gets trolled for DRS gaffes

BRISBANE: Australia made a few bizarre review calls on the third day of the fourth Test against India which has led to captain Tim Paine coping with some criticism on social media.

Paine had decided to review decisions for catches off Mayank Agarwal and later Navdeep Saini, both of which turned out to have missed the bat by a fair distance.

In the 49th over, Agarwal missed a flick shot off Pat Cummins and the ball hit his thigh pads before flying into Paine's gloves. Both the bowler and wicketkeeper appealed and after the umpire shook his head, Paine went for the DRS.

The next incident came in the 103rd over which was also bowled by Cummins. Saini came in after Cummins had got the wicket of Shardul Thakur and evaded a bouncer.

This time it was Matthew Wade at forward short-leg and Cummins who went up in appeal. Paine reviewed the umpire's decision and once again, replays showed clear day light between bat and ball.

"Sums up Tim Paine's reading of the game, that review," said one fan on twitter after the Saini review.

"How many times he fails in DRS," said another fan

"We're thinking of something witty to say to Tim Paine for the drop but you know what... it's wasted on him exactly like he wastes DRS reviews," said a tweet from the handle 'North Stand Gang - Wankhede'.

"Does Tim Paine realise you only use DRS when the onfield decision is wrong?" said another fan.

"Tim Paine looks to be low on confidence wasting two DRS today on marginal at best catches. Seventh wicket partnership from India that broke a few records and AUS not enough diversity in the attack. AUS really needed a few overs from a part timer to break thier focus. #AUSvsIND," said a fan. (IANS)

"The batsmanship has been a real standout and their application and concentration. They didn't throw it away. The partnership was outstanding, exactly what India needed at the time which is what they've been able to produce in a few Test matches. Shardul at the end went for a shot that probably weren't quite on but before that there wasn't many false shots at all played by either of them."

Ricky Ponting
Former Australia captain

Thailand Open: Marin, Axelsen win singles titles

BANGKOK

SPANISH Olympic champion Carolina Marin and Denmark's Viktor Axelsen won the women's and men's singles titles, respectively, at the Thailand Open Super 1000 badminton tournament in Bangkok on Sunday.

Marin, 27, beat Chinese Taipei's top seed Tai Tzu Ying in straight games in an ominous display of form as she prepares to defend her Olympic title later in the year in Tokyo. Tai was limited to a single digit score in the first game and while she fought hard in the second, Marin ended up winning the match 21-9, 21-16.

This was Marin's seventh win in 16

meetings against Tai.

Axelsen, meanwhile, recorded his second consecutive tournament win with a 21-14, 21-14 win over Hong Kong's Angus Ng Ka Long. Axelsen had earlier won the All England Open Championship in March.

Indonesia's Greysia Polii and Apriyani Rahayu beat Thailand's Jongkolphan Kititharakul and Rawinda Prajongjai 21-15, 21-12 to win the women's doubles final. Taiwan's Lee Yang and Wang Chi-Lin beat Malaysia's Goh V Shem and Tan Wee Kiong 16-21, 23-21, 19-21 to win the men's doubles title.

In the mixed doubles, top-seeded Thai pair Dechapol Puavaranukroh and Sapsiree Taerattanachai beat Indonesia's Praveen Jordan and Melati Daeva Oktavianti 21-3, 20-22, 21-18. (IANS)

HI to organise level '1' coaching course from January 29

NEW DELHI

HOCKEY India on Sunday announced that they will conduct the Hockey India Coaching Education Pathway Level '1' Coaching Course 2021 in New Delhi from January 29 to February 1 and Bhubaneswar from February 3 to 6.

The interested applicants can enrol via an open forum link. Each of the candidates undertaking the course has to submit a negative Covid RT-PCR test report with the test taken within 72 hours of arrival at the venue of the course.

The course candidates will be divided into four batches. Each

batch will consist of 30 candidates. The first batch will undertake course from January 29 to 30, while the second batch will undertake the course from January 31 to February 1 in the national capital.

The third batch will undertake the course in Bhubaneswar on February 3 to 4 while the final batch will undertake the course on February 5 to 6 in the same city.

Candidates will be chosen through a first-cum-first-serve basis and minimum criteria to apply require an interested applicant to have successfully passed the Hockey India Level 'Basic' Coaching Course.

NorthEast end seven-game winless streak

VASCO (GOA)

NORTHEAST United got off to a good start under new head coach Khalid Jamil with a 2-1 win over Jamshedpur FC at the Tilak Maidan Stadium on Sunday.

This is NorthEast's first win seven games.

Ashutosh Mehta scored his first ISL goal in the 36th minute to put NorthEast ahead. This was also Mehta's first goal in any league match since he scored for Aizawl under Jamil against Mohun Bagan in the 2016/17 I-League season.

Substitute Deshorn Brown doubled the tally for NorthEast on his debut in the 61st minute. Jamshedpur skipper Stephen Hartley pulled one back in the 89th minute for his side but despite pressing the NorthEast defence hard in the second half, Owen Coyle's side slumped to a third straight defeat.

TODAY'S MATCH

Chennaiyin FC vs SC East Bengal
at GMC Stadium Bambolim 7.30pm



Deshorn Brown scores on debut to double the lead for NEUFC against JFC

NEUFC were the better side in the opening half, dominating possession and creating goal-scoring opportunities. They deservedly went into the break with a one-goal cushion which

RESULTS

Jamshedpur FC lose to
NorthEast United FC 1-2
FC Goa draw with
ATK Mohun Bagan 1-1

could have been more, but for some crucial saves by JFC goalkeeper TP Rehenesh.

It was Jamshedpur who created the first big chance of the game in the 8th minute but NEUFC custodian Subashish Roy Chowdhury denied them the opener.

After Jamshedpur won a throw-in, Khassa Camara's poor clearance fell towards Nerijus Valskis, who found Jadhav just outside the box. The youngster, in turn, whipped a cross for Valskis, who controlled the ball and struck on the volley but saw his shot blocked by Chowdhury.

The best chance for NEUFC arrived during the 32nd minute. Luis Machado, a constant livewire in the first half, came close to breaking the deadlock but Rehenesh did well to keep it out thanks to a brilliant acrobatic effort.

1st Test: England 36 runs away from win

GALLE: England were left on 38/3, needing 36 more runs to win after a frantic end to the fourth day of their first Test against Sri Lanka on Sunday.

The hosts continued their fight back in the fourth day with opener Lahiru Thirimanne scoring his second Test century and Angelo Mathews later pushing them to 359. England were left with a target of 73 to chase. Lasith Embuldeniya made full use of the spin-friendly conditions to dismiss openers Zak Crawley and Dom Sibley for single digits and leave England on 12/2.

Brief scores: Sri Lanka 135 & 359 (Lahiru Thirimanne 111, Angelo Mathews 71; Jack Leach 5/122) vs England 421 & 38/3 (Jonny Bairstow 11 not out; Lasith Embuldeniya 2/13).

'I have learnt a lot more from my losses'

NEW DELHI

WORLD badminton champion PV Sindhu was disappointed when the Tokyo Olympics were postponed last year, but she utilised the free time to work on rectifying her mistakes. The ace Indian shuttler recently returned to the court at the Thailand Open but crashed out in the first round. Sindhu says losses remind her of the need to come back stronger the next time.

"I learnt a lot last year. The first thing was patience, because we had no tournaments for a couple of months. We couldn't step out or play badminton, and we

needed to have patience," Sindhu told IANS while delving upon her realisations amid the ongoing Covid crisis.

"I spent a lot more time with my family because (earlier) all the time was spent travelling to tournaments and back. This was the first time I spent a lot more time with my family. I was training at home. One thing I've learned is patience, and being positive all the time," added the champion, whose life has inspired a biopic, which is currently under development.

Sindhu continued: "Last year around March and April, we were getting ready for the Olympics. Unfortunately that got postponed. I was a bit sad, but then I took it in a positive way thinking I now had a lot more time to learn, rectify my mistakes and work on my strokes'. So, that way (I learnt) to stay positive and move forward."

The Tokyo Olympics were slated to be held in July-August last year, but got delayed because of the pandemic, which disrupted the calendar of all events in 2020.

With normalcy gradually setting in, Sindhu returned to the badminton court at the Thai-

land Open. However, she didn't have a great start. The current world champion crashed out in the opening round of the tournament after losing to Denmark's Mia Blichfeldt. It was Sindhu's first tournament since the All England Open in March last year.

I am excited to be back on court," noted the Rio Olympic silver medallist, adding that she is "just focusing on my badminton right now".

For the 25-year-old, losses are as important as wins.

"I would like to say to all the young juniors that parental support is very important. When I started playing badminton, my parents supported me a lot. And (I feel parents) need to understand what their kid is interested in and support them in that particular thing."

"(Another thing is) When you start, you lose some and you win some. When you lose, there is always a sad thing (because) you always want to win. That doesn't happen. But you will learn a lot more from your losses," she shared.

"I have learnt a lot from my losses, and you need to come back stronger the next time," shared the star player, who was a celebrity guest on the show, "Young Genius". (IANS)