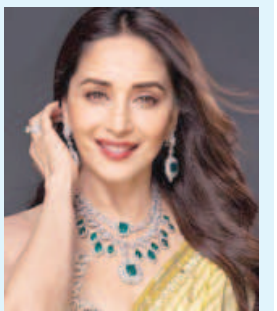


Womenia

TWEET PATROL


MADHURI DIXIT NENE
@MADHURIDIXIT

I have learnt so much from aai& I continue to do so every single day
 Family (woman, girl)#MothersDay



Education beyond textbooks

TEJAL SINHA

GuruQ is a digital tutoring platform that was born out of the desire to cater to the individual needs of every child-their learning styles and IQ. The student-teacher ratio in schools makes it impossible to give students individual attention.

Minal believes that school education is incomplete by itself, and is in an extreme need to be supplemented, else students are the ones who suffer and lose out. Students will only be equipped to succeed when learning is customized to their own style. Therefore, the key ingredient of quality tuition is the tutors. GuruQ is forever on the lookout for enthusiastic, experienced, and qualified tutors with the right aptitude and attitude. Tutors undergo a stringent multi-level vetting process (including verifying their knowledge, qualifications, experience, skills, teaching techniques & background) and only the best tutors are inducted into the GuruQ community.

They are also trained to use the GuruQ digital platform and tutor dashboard to simplify their lives, teach & manage their students efficiently. Through the dashboard, they can manage their schedules, classes & students and create & send notes, assignments, tests, and exams.

With the GuruQ platform, students are given different ways to find tutors as per their exact requirements. Since students today are pressed for time, we help them save it by providing tuition completely at their convenience. Students can personalize their tuition classes with respect to the mode of class (offline or online), type of class (individual or group), and budget. They can select a tutor and book classes at short notice and/or even book them with selected tutors by the hour for special needs such as revision and exam preparation. Even parents can keep track of their child's progress online and seek feedback when they want to.

Elaborating more on what inspired Minal to start GuruQ, she shares, "It was launched in the



Minal Anand, the Founder and Chief Executive Officer at GuruQ, a unique and integrated digital tutoring platform that promises to bring high-quality standards and new age methodologies to the way education is imparted in India. She has previously taught several underprivileged school students and it is this very experience that armed her with the required knowledge to pursue the idea of starting her own venture

year 2017. While pursuing a degree in Business Administration overseas, I realized that there was such a sharp contrast between the quality of education being offered there versus that which was being offered in India. In the US, there was a predominant use of the digital platform and innovative teaching methodologies. However, it was disheartening to note that educators in India are not well-equipped or well-versed in the latest teaching methods. Education in India is still rigid, text bookish, and will serve no good use to students who will step into their professional lives in the near future. Technology is rapidly transforming jobs and students in India will lose out as they are not being trained to be technologically savvy or to think outside the classroom. I therefore, wanted to bring the change in India or at least try to do so."

At GuruQ, students gain a firm understanding of subjects where every doubt is cleared and every concept is explained in detail. A tech-driven education that goes beyond the textbook will allow our students to compete globally and succeed.

Minal shares, "Initially students were unsure of how to use the highly interactive and friendly dashboard simply because they did not have a firm understanding of technology but with time and guidance by our team, they were able to pick up on how to do so. To date, we have parents and students who will call up our helpline and ask for booking of tuition classes over a call instead of using the dashboard to book which shows how most are adverse to change and cling on to the familiar even though it might be outdated. Further, we take daily updates on their business operations. Since we are a digital learning platform, we are connecting the concerns of our

tutors and any students through our robust feedback mechanism. We had built it even before we were hit by the pandemic. We have consistently improvised and improved our back-end technical processes. With the pandemic, the pace of work has changed. But we are recalibrating our business operations to ensure we do our job. We are also flexible with those employees who still prefer to work from home due to their constraints."

The pandemic impact on education sector

The impact of the pandemic is observed in every sector around the world. The education sectors of India as well as the world are badly affected by this. It has enforced the worldwide lockdown creating a very bad effect on the students' life. Around 32 crore learners stopped to move schools or colleges, all educational activities halted in India. The outbreak of COVID-19 has advised us that change is inevitable. It has worked as a catalyst for educational institutions to grow and opt for platforms and techniques, which have not been used before. The education sector has been fighting to survive the crises with



"While a big hue and cry is made about using AI, the on-ground reality is that the masses are still ill-equipped to use it. We have learned lessons in collaboration and consistent communication to keep in touch with the team."
- Minal Anand

a different approach and digitizing the challenges to wash away the threat of the pandemic.

"GuruQ aims to provide an alternative coaching option to students and claims to maintain the same level of classroom engagement in its online classes. It is also re-adjusting the teaching methods to suit students' unique needs. GuruQ is leveraging technology and has trained its teachers to use the tutor dashboard to teach and manage their students efficiently. Through the dashboard, they can manage their schedules, classes, and students as well as create and send notes, assignments, tests, and exams," ends Minal.

NEWS ROUNDUP

Anushka Sharma thanks healthcare, frontline workers for 'working tirelessly'

Actress Anushka Sharma took to Instagram, on Sunday, to thank all the healthcare and frontline workers for their dedicated efforts as India fights the second wave of the deadly Covid-19.

She posted a video with pictures of doctors, policemen and ambulances and wrote, "Thank You, A huge shoutout to all the frontliners working tirelessly day and night putting their lives at risk to save ours. India stands by you." She captioned the video as, "We'd like to say a big thank you to all our healthcare and frontline workers, their dedication is truly inspiring. You continue to risk your lives for the nation, and for that, we are eternally grateful to you. You are the real heroes, for Virat and I, and for the nation. Thank you once again."

The couple recently announced a fundraiser, #InThisTogether, to help people cope with the Covid crises in the country. They donated Rs 2 crore for this initiative.



Secrets to look stylish everyday



Have you ever wondered about the secrets that fashionable women keep to themselves? Would you love to be counted as one of them? Well, then you are in luck because this post will take you through some tips that will help you look stylish every day.

Keep occasion in mind

If you really observe the most stylish women around, then you will realise that they are dressed according to the occasion. Their look is appropriate and polished keeping in mind the dress code of a company or an organisation. In case, you are in doubt, ask someone about the dress code so that you dress accordingly. Always keep in mind the occasion and you'll never go wrong.

Appropriate inner-wear
 One of the most important

things to remember to be stylish everyday is to wear the appropriate inner-wear. It is because it has a big impact on the final look. For instance, using light color inner-wear for light tops is a thumb rule that must be followed. In case, you want to tuck your tummy in, you can wear shape wear in an appropriate manner; else the result won't be very lady like!

Select the perfect accessories

When it comes to accessories, sometimes we all get a little overboard because we love to show off what we have. When accessorising, always take off the last thing you put on. This piece of advice goes to prove that too much is not always too good. Always keep in mind that the accessories should compliment your outfit.

MOTHER OCEAN DAY

Water is essential to human life. In fact, it is essential to all of the forms of life known to humankind in general, as there are no known species that can survive without it.

Though marine biologists are unsure just how many kinds of creatures reside in our planet's 5 oceans, it is estimated that about one-quarter of all of the Earth's species do. Not to mention how very important the oceans are to our civilization for thousands of years, braving their waters has been one of the bravest feats a human being could accomplish, one that often led to amazing discoveries and the general increase of our knowledge of the planet we inhabit. For all of these reasons and many, many more, Mother Ocean Day is a long-overdue celebration of our oceans in all of their majesty and peril.



Breathing exercises to strengthen your respiratory system during Covid-19

JYOTI DABAS

While Covid-19 cases continue to surge, we need to be even more vigilant, while staying at home and keeping ourselves healthy and fit. While eating right and exercising ensures our bodies and minds stay fit, it is also important to strengthen our respiratory system – as that is also severely affected by the virus.

Breathing exercises are a great way to develop the lungs as they improve lung muscles, clear out any secretion and increase the capacity by supplying an adequate amount of oxygen. There are several other benefits to these exercises as well! It also helps us stay calmer, and de-stress especially in these unprecedented times we are living in.

To get started, here are five breathing exercises you can do at any time of the day and in any comfortable space.

Deep breathing with increasing counts: breath-in and breath-out

This is one of the easiest and most important exercises. It helps in strengthening our lungs and improving blood flow, immunity and eliminating stress and anxiety.

- Steps:**
- Sit down in a relaxed position, take a deep breath and count your inhalation and exhalation. Ideally, your inhalation and exhalation counts should be the same.
 - With each breath increase the count to inhale and exhale for as long as comfortable. Practise from 2 to 5 minutes duration.

Diaphragmatic breathing

Also known as belly breathing, or abdominal breathing, this particular exercise has various benefits such as managing irritable bowel syndrome, depression, anxiety and insomnia. Normally people get in the habit of breathing without fully utilizing the lower part of their lungs. With this breathing technique, you consciously practise filling in lungs to their maximum capacity and increasing oxygen uptake.

- Steps:**
- Lie flat on the floor or sit in a comfortable position and relax your shoulders
 - Put one hand below your chest and just above your stomach (this is where your diaphragm sits).
 - Take a deep breath in by expanding your diaphragm or stomach and exhale slowly.

Cardiovascular exercise

The benefit of any cardiovascular exercises is that it increases your heart rate which forces the respiratory system to become more efficient and eventually increases the amount of oxygen you take with each breath. This allows for your lungs to improve capacity and function better. Here are some of the most common cardiovascular exercises that you can do from the comfort of your home: are brisk walking, spot jogging, jumping rope, jump-

If performed daily, these exercises will help in developing a stronger respiratory system which can help our body to fight any possible infection

ing jacks and climbing staircase.

Anulom-vilom

More commonly known as alternate nostril breathing, it is a prevalent Pranayama and has been spoken about in the Hatha Yoga literature. This exercise helps clear out the nasal passage and improves respiratory muscle strength. It is advised that Anulom-vilom should be practiced on an empty stomach ideally in the morning or in the evening after a long meal gap.

Steps:

- Sit on a chair or on the ground cross legged, in a meditation position
- With your right thumb, close your right nostril and inhale through the left nostril. Release your right nostril and with your middle and ring finger, close your left nostril exhaling through the right nostril.
- Inhale through the right nostril, then release the fingers, closing the right nostril and exhaling through the left nostril.
- Continue the slow breathing through alternate nostrils and focus on the breath.
- Practice this for 10 minutes for benefits to start accruing

Bhramari

Derived from Sanskrit, brahmari literally means a bee. It is a humming exercise, which increases nitric oxide in the body and acts as vasodilators; helps with easier blood flow through the vessels and prevents muscles from tightening.

Steps:

- Sit on a chair or on the ground cross legged, in a meditation position
- Close your ears using your thumb and place your middle and ring fingers lightly at the inner corner of your eyes. Rest your index finger above your eyebrows and little finger where it rests on your cheeks.
- Take a deep breathe in and while exhaling make a soft humming sound similar to 'hmmmm', throughout the entire exhalation. Inhale again and while exhaling make the humming sound.
- Practice for 10 minutes for benefits to start accruing. These exercises won't help prevent COVID, however, if performed daily, they will help in developing a stronger respiratory system which can help our body to fight any possible infection. Having said that, if you or your family members have any pre-existing health conditions or are feeling any discomfort, please do consult with your doctor.

Aligarh Muslim University reels under coronavirus attack

BRIJ KHANDELWAL
AGRA

MORE than 40 serving and retired faculty members, plus several non-teaching staffers of the Aligarh Muslim University have succumbed to Covid-19. Each day, the graph is going up.

Vice Chancellor Tariq Mansoor lost his elder brother a few days ago. On Saturday, the dean of the Law faculty died. A large number of staffers are under treatment at the Jawa-

har Lal Nehru Medical College hospital of the AMU.

Social activist Prof Jasim Mohammad told IANS, "The university administration had failed, the medical college system has collapsed. The VC has not even bothered to ask for Oxygen. He has not sought help from any quarters. May be a hundred have already died and in another one month, there could be another 100 deaths, if conditions do not improve." The number of deaths could be much higher, but the university officials could not

give the exact numbers.

The campus is deserted and there are no classes. Most hostellers have left, said Zee-shan, an official of the university.

Several faculty members have left Aligarh. One member, now in Tamil Nadu, told IANS, "In addition to the pandemic spreading its wings wide, there was a total psychological breakdown, despair and also a degree of disgust." Quite a few retired faculty members who left Aligarh have died in their home towns like Bhopal, Hy-

derabad.

Jasim has sought critical information from the VC through an RTI. He has asked the VC about the shortages of medicines, Oxygen, ambulances etc.

Locals allege that the university administration despite all the resources, has been caught napping. No special mechanism or arrangements have been put in place. Due to the fear of infection, people are shunning going to the medical college for vaccination. "Fear is rampant. The winds of de-

spair and gloom sweep the campus. The central government should step in and control the worsening situation," says a local student.

So far it is not clear how many of the deceased were vaccinated, though it is widely accepted that there have been a few deaths due to Covid-morbidities and age.

According to the district administration, on May 8, there were 417 fresh cases, 295 were discharged. Local medical circles confirmed the situation was really alarming.



Hooda concerned over Covid surge in Haryana villages



CHANDIGARH

FORMER two-time Haryana Chief Minister and Congress leader Bhupinder Hooda on Sunday advised the state government to formulate a special policy for the rural areas with the sudden surge in Covid-19 cases.

"A large population in villages has been hit by Covid and they are fighting for their lives due to lack of treatment. While the villages have been hit, there is no system of testing or to treat them, forcing the people to use home remedies to save their lives," said Hooda, currently the Leader of Opposition in the Haryana Assembly.

"There have been reports of deaths in village after village and many families have lost their loved ones, but the figure of deaths in rural areas is not being shown in the government records," he said.

Hooda said the government would not be able to assess the exact situation without collecting data from the villages along with the cities. Also, there was

an urgent need to scale up medical facilities in rural areas.

"The government should ensure testing, tracing, medical camps as well as provision of temporary hospitals in the villages. There is need to formulate a comprehensive policy so that the villagers can get the medical advice and treatment on time. The quota of oxygen will have to be doubled by the Central government," he added.

He also appealed to the villagers to take all precautions to avoid infection. "People must avoid community hookahs, playing cards and meetings during the pandemic. Personal contact and interaction with each other is a part of our rural social fabric but this only contributes to the spread of the pandemic. We must give primacy to each other's health and it is important to avoid direct contact with each other," Hooda added. A day earlier, Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar announced to launch a special Covid screening drive in all the villages by constituting 8,000 multidisciplinary teams.

Real estate firm, IAF set up 150-bed Covid facility



GURUGRAM

AMID a shortage of beds for Covid patients in Gurugram, real estate firm M3M Group has collaborated with the Indian Air Force (IAF) to set up a 150-bed Covid hospital in vacant flats at Sector 67.

Officials also said that under the initiative, both the M3M Group and IAF will provide food and medical as well as oxygen facilities to the Covid patients in Gurugram.

At the hospital, a mobile medical unit is also being made available for shifting any patient from the Covid-care centre to the facility.

The realty major also said that soon they will add an additional 250 beds to create a 400-bed lifeline for covid patients within a month.

Appreciating the effort, Gurugram Deputy Commissioner Yash Garg has appealed to other companies in the district to come forward and help the government in fighting the pan-

demic.

"As per the guidance of Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar and continuous support from Health Minister Anil Vij, this Centre has become functional now with 150 beds at our project OKR in sector 67 in Gurugram.

We thank the Indian Air Force for joining us with their expertise and necessary support for this initiative and I am grateful to Artemis hospital, Paras hospital and W-Pratiksha hospital for the required support. We thank all government departments in Gurugram for their support for making this functional", said Payal Kanodia, Trustee, M3M Foundation.

This Covid Care centre which will be run and managed by the IAF, is a part of M3M foundation's PAN India initiative "Kartavya" and where the foundation has already supported more than 1,00,000 people at the construction and migrant workers through their food security and other initiatives in the first phase.

UP govt extends lockdown till May 17

LUCKNOW

THE Uttar Pradesh government has decided to extend the lockdown till May 17 in the state to break the chain of coronavirus infections, the government said here on Sunday.

State Additional Chief Secretary, Information, Navneet Sehgal said it would be like a partial corona curfew. During this time all necessary services will continue as before.

In view of the fast spreading infections in the villages after the panchayat elections and the festival of Eid on May 14, the Yogi

Adityanath government has extended the lockdown for a week, the official said.

In a review meeting with the Chief Minister, Team-9 decided to extend the lockdown till May 17 at 7 a.m. to break the chain of infections. All restrictions will remain in force as before. Essential services will continue to be exempted. Strict action will be taken against those who roam unnecessarily. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has said that the objective of the corona curfew will only be successful if the protocols are strictly implemented.

Navneet Sehgal said, people

themselves are not coming out of their homes. He said industrial and e-commerce activities will continue as before. Ration distribution and vaccination will also carry on. However, in containment zones, only door-to-door delivery will be allowed.

The UP government on April 29 had decided to enforce lockdown from 8 p.m. on Friday to 7 a.m. on Tuesday and then extended it for two more days till May. Then on May 5, the lockdown was extended till Monday (May 10) at 7 a.m. in the morning. Now it has again been extended till 7 a.m. on May 17.



7 held for selling pneumonia injections as remdesivir

NOIDA

WITH the arrest of seven persons, the Noida police on Saturday claimed to have busted a gang that sold vials of injections used in pneumonia treatment packaged as remdesivir.

Remdesivir is an antiviral drug that is being used for the treatment of COVID-19 patients. Due to its high demand, it is not easily available in the market. The accused have been identified as Musir, Salman Khan, Shahrulkh Ali, Azharuddin, Abdul Rahman, Deepanshu alias Dharamvir Vishwakarma and Bunty Singh, all residents of Uttar Pradesh, the police said. While some work as nursing staff with hospitals in Delhi-NCR, others are medical representatives of pharmaceuti-

cal companies, they said.

The accused used their credentials to target gullible people who needed remdesivir injections in hospitals and at pharmacies, they said. The accused sold a vial between Rs 40,000 and Rs 45,000 when it normally does not cost more than Rs 3,500 depending on the manufacturer, the police said. Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (Noida) Ranvijay Singh said police in Gautam Buddh Nagar district have been alert and are tracking such elements engaged in hoarding and black marketing of resources, including medicines, which are in demand during the ongoing pandemic.

"Today, the teams of ACP 2 and Sector 58 police station met with success after they arrested these

seven people who were part of a gang that sold injections used in pneumonia treatment to needy persons after wrapping them in labels of remdesivir injection," he said. Singh said the gang members used their credentials to illegally make huge profits by defrauding gullible and needy people.

Nine vials of genuine and 140 vials of fake remdesivir injections and Rs 2.45 lakh cash, among other items, were recovered from the accused, the police said. An FIR has been lodged against the accused at Sector 58 police station under provisions of the Epidemic Diseases Act besides sections 420 (cheating), 468 and 470 (both related to forgery) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), Singh said.

Hike quota of O₂ to 300 MT, Punjab CM urges PM



CHANDIGARH

PUNJAB Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Sunday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to increase the total quota of oxygen to 300 metric tonnes (MT), and ensure urgent supplies of vaccine for the state, which has been facing shortage on both counts.

The Chief Minister raised these issues when Modi called him up to discuss the state's Covid-19 situation and the measures being taken to tackle the crisis.

The Prime Minister assured of all possible help, the Chief Minister said later, adding he hoped the Centre would take immediate steps to supplement the oxygen supplies, and ensure that vaccine doses were sent to Punjab on priority to help the state effectively manage the situation triggered by the second wave of the pandemic.

On the vaccine front, Amarinder Singh told the Prime Minister that the state had so far been unable to initiate the Phase III vaccination process for 18-45 age group, which will now start in government hospitals on Monday following the delivery of 100,000 doses.

For the 45 plus age group, too, the vaccine doses were in short supply, and while 1.63 lakh doses were expected to come today, these were not enough to meet the state's requirement, he added.

The Chief Minister informed Modi that the state urgently required 300 MT of oxygen in view

of the growing caseload of critically ill patients, many of whom were coming from other states, including Delhi-NCR.

The state has a high mortality count, and hospitalisation in Level II and III facilities (both government and private) has seen a sharp surge over the past three weeks, pushing up the oxygen demand.

From 197 MT on April 22, the demand had risen to 295.5 MT on May 8, he pointed out, adding that the shortage of tankers had made the situation worse and the Centre's support was needed to enhance the LMO quota and also supply more tankers to Punjab to enable it to cope with the crisis.

An official spokesperson later told the media that state Health Secretary Hussan Lal, in a letter to Additional Secretary in the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, had noted that while the state has taken several steps to ensure judicious use of oxygen by hospitals, in line with the advisory of the government of India, the growing demand for oxygen necessitated an increase in allocation to 300 MT.

Further, only four oxygen tankers have been allocated to Punjab, of which two are yet to be made functional. Since 40 per cent of the allocation (227 MT) is out of Bokaro (in Jharkhand) from where transport of oxygen takes three to five days, the Health Secretary has requested allocation of at least eight more tankers on an urgent basis, against the total demand for 20 tankers raised by the state.

10 vials of Remdesivir seized from Faridabad

CHANDIGARH

HARYANA'S Food and Drugs Administration Department on Sunday said it has seized 10 vials of Remdesivir from Faridabad town being sold in the black market.

Six vials were seized from Aankhir Chowk, while four from Metro Hospital. The accused in

both raids were arrested.

Sharing details regarding hoarding of essential drugs for Covid-19 treatment, Health Minister Anil Vij said cases of black marketing and overcharging have become rampant due to which the department has been keeping a strict vigil.

More than 15 FIRs have been registered.

Marriage only at home or court, strict rules in Delhi

NEW DELHI

DELHI, gasping for oxygen with overloaded health management of the state administration for the last few weeks, will witness more stringent restrictions after a fresh round of lockdown will come into effect from Monday morning.

Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), in order to combat the spread of the second wave of Covid infections, has decided to put some more restrictions on movement of individuals and groups of people within the city.

Delhi's lifeline transport services - Delhi metro rail will remain

shut till the DDMA assesses the outcome of the lockdown in the city and number of cases till next order. Marriage functions will not be permitted at gardens, halls, hotels or any other public places, except at homes with only 20 people. "There will be complete prohibition on organising any marriage ceremony at public places/ marriage hall/banquet hall/hotels and similar places. Marriages may however be organised in Court or at home, in which not more than 20 people will be allowed to participate," an order issued on on Sunday by Delhi Chief Secretary Vijay Dev read. Individuals moving in



the city will have to produce a solid reason with production of soft copy of e-pass issued by the Delhi government. DJ sound, catering facilities will not be allowed at any marriage function across the city till May 17. The DDMA has directed Delhi police to ensure effective checking of movement of persons and vehicles by putting adequate number of barricades. "Police authority shall ensure effective checking of movement of persons and vehicles by putting adequate number of checking points with objective to prevent unnecessary movement of people on roads during curfew," DDMA order stated.

Our rulers must accept failures, take corrective measures

LEADING international medical journal The Lancet on Saturday called upon the Modi-led government to “own up to its mistakes, provide responsible leadership and implement a public health response that has science at its heart to contain Covid”.

In its editorial, The Lancet said India squandered its early successes in controlling Covid-19 and till April, the government’s Task Force had not met in months. It observed government’s attempts to stifle criticism inexcusable. Even before the 2nd wave, government declared it was Covid ‘endgame’. Its actions falsely suggested that India had reached herd immunity and despite warnings, it allowed huge political rallies, events. It said even before the second wave began in early March, Indian Health Minister Harsh Vardhan declared that the country was in the “endgame” of the pandemic. The BJP has been trying to duck and rubbish such observations saying that Lancet being a scientific magazine should restrict itself to matters related to research etc and not talk on political lines. The most unfortunate thing is that our political executive refuses to accept the truth though they are aware of it. Ask any volunteer on the roads of Delhi or for that matter in any State, he would come out with stories on how people were suffering while the governments keep patting their own back.

Undoubtedly, the political strategist Prashant Kishore was right when he, in an interview, said that India was passing through a stage where the all governments want psychological dominance. They don’t stop at seeking votes as it used to be in the past. They want to control the mind space of the people. They allege that nothing happened in the country till they came to power. The parties that had come to power particularly in the last six and half years have shifted their focus from effective governance to taking control of everything.

He is right as we are seeing that there is growing sense of intolerance by every government. If someone tries to revolt or even question, all-out efforts are made to suppress the voice. The tendency is ‘listen to what we say, clap at what we say and do or get slapped.’

For any political party, the leaders and cadre should be the eyes and ears of the government. They should be allowed to give feedback on real ground level situation. But that never happens. They keep praising everything the Chief Minister or the Prime Minister says. They present a picture as if everything was fine and people were enjoying Ram Rajya. Not just the rank and file of the ruling party but the officials also generally paint a rosy picture instead of telling the political bosses

about where corrective action needs to be taken. It is really a matter of regret the Chief Ministers or Prime Minister hold meetings with officials and ministers, but the fact is none of them is an expert on the pandemic. They look at the situation more from economic angle. Even opposition parties are not holding discussions with experts to come up with reports and suggestions for the government. It is a different matter whether the government accepts it or not. They should do their duty and put the findings in public domain and let people judge who is doing what and whether the ruling parties are moving in proper direction or not.

Maharashtra which till recently has seen cases reach a peak has shown the way on how to mobilise public support to fight the pandemic. It has roped in Reliance Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Reliance Industries Limited (RIL). The RIL Had undertaken certain initiatives to battle COVID-19 in Mumbai in coordination with the Maharashtra government and Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC). Hospitals with RF will manage 875 beds for coronavirus patients in the city. Where there is a will there is a way. Hope governments will wake up at least now.



Multiplexes face single screen fate

Film and television production has come to a halt again due to the second lockdown. The production sector will bounce back soon as the things are back to normal, and so will most of the film-related sectors albeit with bruises. But what happens to the multiplex cinema properties that sprang up like wild mushrooms all over the country? Now that is a tough situation there. The first multiplex at Saket, Delhi, came up in 1997, owned by the PVR group. The 20th century was nearing its end, and the 21st century promised to be the era of multiplexes. Not only the big corporate houses, investors and even foreign companies entered this exhibition trade. There was no bases or logic in the build-up to the multiplex rise.

This unchecked growth of the multiplexes was becoming a burden on the exhibition trade. Instead of catering to the captive movie watchers in one locality, around which the cinema was built, the multiplexes in many places came up in close proximity of each other vying for the same local viewer and thereby creating a competition for each other.

In fact, having four to five and, in many cases, even many more screens in a single property was creating competition for itself. But to have as many as 15 screens within a kilometre was unviable and made no business sense. The multiple screens became a norm. Mumbai’s Link Road in Andheri is one example. To beat that is the bunching of as many as 40 screens on Pune’s Magarpatta area. At least two properties have more than 10 screens! It was each to his own and there was no control over this growth. As the existing chains went on adding to their screens, a lot many independent entrepreneurs who made money in other businesses started investing in multiplex properties. One of the reasons for the early multiplex rush was the favourable sops available to them from the governments in the form of tax holidays and such. While this led to the growth of multiplex screens, on the flip side it caused the downfall of the business of single screens.

Single screens had no such benefits like the multiplex properties. Too add to that, the novelty of the multiplex experience was a lure for the moviegoer. The single screen had no chance in hell against such odds. The dice were loaded against them for even while the powers that be helped promote the business of multiplexes, nothing was done to make sure the single screens survived, too.

Multiplex cinema had not only driven the single screens out of business, it had also driven away the masses -- the compulsive moviegoers -- who had to catch a new film on its opening day, preferably, the first show. The admission rates were out of their reach.

Watching cinema at a multiplex had a snob value now. Everything about it was pricy, from popcorn to colas. But, even among multiplex cinemas, a sort of apartheid was created. Like, one or two screens in a cinema property were given special tags and, hence, higher admission rates. And there were those who would not be seen taking in a movie in any other screen but the costliest one! Then there were cinemas where the last one or two rows of back seats were priced doubly from rest of the rows. These were meant for college students and other couples to indulge, watching the movie playing on the screen being of least interest to them! Now, couples do indulge but to charge and make it convenient for them is not a very pleasant business practice! There was a multiplex and there was a multiplex. Soon, they were being graded by the audience as well. The ones with high ticket rates, located in upmarket areas, and, most of all, managed by a big-name reputed chain scored over others. Even a local cabbie would suggest the big brand to you if you were in another city.

Another factor that worked against the multiplexes, unlike the single screen cinemas, was that they milched a big star film to the last drop in shortest of periods. Multiple shows at enhanced admission rates were played together in all the neighbouring cinemas accounting for anything like 60 to 75 screenings per day. To their peril, there were few takers for a film after the opening weekend! How many big bill films released a year, 10 at best?

Compare this to the single screen era. There was this system of a main cinema, which would be located at the centre of a city and a limited number of cinemas (say, 18 to 20) spread over rest of the city and its suburbs, to cater to the local population around it. That way, every cinema house had its regular and loyal audience. And all cinemas ran just four shows per day. That gave a film longer run and steady box office.

So, what has happened to these single screen cinemas that boasted of the glory of screening many memorable films? Most of them are lying in ruins as dead properties. Some have gulped their pride and converted into storage depots or parking lots while those still standing are looking for an alternate use of premise. Also, some are stuck in family property disputes.

The renowned cinematographer Hemant Chaturvedi, who has shot films like “Company”, “Maqbool”, “Kurbaan”, “Ishqzaade”, “Ungli” and “Brothers” among others, has embarked on a mission to record the past glory and the present status of single screens spread over the country. He has been visiting and shooting pictures of these cinema houses with the intent to publish a book.

Hemant has been posting the pictures on the social media of some of the cinemas he covered. To say the least, it is sad to see the pathetic state of these structures in ruin with vintage projectors, film reels, posters and other paraphernalia lying all over, nothing to say of the decor and the fixtures that saw better days in their prime.

Are the multiplex properties going the same way as the single screens?

Looking at how things stand now, let alone growth, the very survival seems impossible for a lot of them. To add to their problems is the boom of OTT platforms. The release of the major film, Salman Khan’s “Radhe” on Zeeplex this week, can set a trend that can mean a deathly blow to the multiplex business. (The next big film, “Sooryavanshi”, is expected to follow the OTT route with the probable release date of August 15).

The best in business have exhausted their reserves, are deep into new debts of borrowings from the open market. Monthly outgoing vary from Rs 35 crore to 45 crore. This has not only caused depletion of reserves but also led to liquidating personal stakes to raise monies to keep the properties business ready.

Cinepolis, a late entrant in the Indian exhibition trade, is said to have called it quits in the international exhibition trade. And to think that the group, with highest number of best maintained screens internationally, did not believe in any property smaller than 10 screens. Carnival cinemas has not been able to stick to its commitments to the landlords. E Square cinemas, has palmed off all but two of their 49 screens, the two which they owned are given on long lease. Then there is the biggest North India based SRS Cinema chain with 56 screens in 20 properties across 15 cities, it was in the offing even before the lockdown loomed. The story is the same with all such properties.

The borrowings and the rentals weigh heavily on multiplex properties as most such cinemas are located in malls, almost all rented properties face tough times ahead. If the situation does not change soon, the exhibition trade may be in the news for wrong reasons, like litigations.

(Vinod Mirani is a veteran film writer and box office analyst. The views expressed are personal)

THE WAY AHEAD



Dr Bharat Jhunjhunwala

We are caught between the devil and the deep blue sea in respect of imposition of lockdowns. According to a paper published by the Frankfurt School of Finance, not imposing a lockdown leads to higher

numbers of deaths which, in turn, leads to lower economic growth. On the other hand, imposition of lockdown leads to a direct reduction of economic activity and lower economic growth even though some improvement takes place after a time. According to Financial Firm Jeffries, three State of the United States, namely, Arizona, Texas and Utah, did not impose lockdowns. The result was greater spread of Covid and the economy of these States was more impacted negatively than other States. In other words, economy is not better if lockdown is not imposed. This same study describes the different trajectories of two Scandinavian countries Sweden and Denmark. Lockdown was not imposed in Sweden and people were encouraged to follow social distancing and wearing of masks voluntarily. Lockdown was imposed in Denmark. It was found that the rate of death in Sweden was five times higher than in Denmark. This underscores the fact that lockdowns are necessary. Two papers published by the University of Oxford and Wiley Clinical Practice, both said that late imposition of lockdown in United Kingdom led to higher death rate and a negative impact on the economy. These studies indicate that lockdowns have necessarily to be imposed. Not imposing lockdown may seem to help economy by not prohibiting economic activity immediately but that does not save the economy because then the higher death rate soon impacts the economy.

We have to understand the recommendation of the World Health Organization to avoid imposing lockdowns in this background. David Nabarro of WHO has said that lockdowns are very harsh on the poor and should therefore be imposed only as a last resort. He has also said that the poor are left without food which leads them to breaking the lockdowns. That leads to greater spread of the virus and makes the lockdown unsuccessful for rich and poor alike. We have seen how the huge movement of migrant labour in the first lockdown had taken place and added to the infections. It is clear that imposition and non-imposition of lockdown—both have a negative impact on the economy. The way out is to impose a lockdown but fine tune it to reduce the economic hardship. The Economist Today has suggested that construction workers could be required to stay within the boundaries to reduce possibility of infection. The same could be done for manufacturing industries and software parks. Another suggestion is to segregate workers in two groups and place them in alternate shifts so that, in case infection takes place, it affects only one-half of the workers and production does not totally come to a standstill.

It is also necessary to determine on which activities to impose and on which activities not to impose a lockdown. Economists calculate the costs and benefits of various projects. The costs and benefits of locking down various activities can be calculated separately. For example, the costs and benefits of lockdown in a school, bus travel, rail travel, international travel, restaurants, cinema halls, street corner markets and manufacturing activities can be calculated separately. Those activities that have high costs and low benefits can be locked down while others can be allowed. For example, cinema halls may have a high cost because large numbers of people are confined in a closed space but the benefits may be nominal since they add very little to the economic activity. Such activities can be locked down. While schools that create long term economic value may be allowed to open.

With certain activities there can be multiple scenarios. For schools, for example, the costs and benefits can be calculated in following scenarios: (1) complete lockdown; (2) complete lockdown with e-learning; (3) no lockdown with aggressive testing and tracing; and (4) no lockdown without testing and tracing. This calculation can then be done separately for primary, secondary and higher education. It can further be done for residential and non-residential schools. It may appear cumbersome to make these calculations. But given that the Covid pandemic shows no signs of abating, it is necessary to assess these multiple options and implement the best among them. Such fine tuning would encourage the institutions to move to Covid-resistant models. For example, schools may move towards the e-learning



It is clear that imposition and non-imposition of lockdown—both have a negative impact on the economy. The way out is to impose a lockdown but fine tune it to reduce the economic hardship

and residential models so that they can operate despite the lockdowns outside.

A paper in the Wiley Clinical Practice journal has emphasized that lockdowns are more likely to succeed if the people are taken into confidence rather than mainly imposed from the top. I recall that last year towards the beginning of the pandemic, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo used to hold one hour long press briefing every day and informed people of the true state of the pandemic and the facilities that he was trying to arrange. I believe that had a great impact on compliance by the public. Even I sitting in India was impressed. On the other hand, even during the strict lockdown last April, the ministers in Uttarakhand were nowhere to be seen and officials were issuing passes to one and sundry. The holding of public meetings and family functions without social distancing in the presence of leaders sends and exactly opposite message. A daily press briefing by our Minister of Health would help clear a lot of misinformation that may be circulating. I recall that Lal Bahadur Shastri had asked the people of the country to fast one day a week to save food grains. I was only 15 years old at that time and was en-

couraged to follow the advice.

David Navarro of WHO has emphasized that the economic impact of lockdowns is severe and disproportionate on the poor. The poor find themselves locked down without food. The only way they can possibly survive is by breaking the lockdown and undertaking their petty income earning activities. Therefore, a study by Harvard University has said that direct cash transfers to poor must be made while imposing strict lockdowns. A paper published by the scholars of the London School of Economics has said that helping small industries and affected people to manage through the pandemic by giving loans may not work. The borrowers will be burdened by debt and, in the absence of quick revival of economic activity, will not be able to repay the debt. That may necessitate write-offs and further impose costs on the economy.

We need to shift gears. More nuanced lockdowns are needed along with cash transfers to get out of the pandemic.

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

LETTERS

Conversion of Calvary temple into Covid care centre inspiring

WE in India need more good Samaritans and patriots like Bro. Satish, who converted his Calvary temple, one of the biggest in this part of the world, into a Covid isolation centre, to give free treatment to patients from under privileged class. (Kavitha inaugurates Covid isolation centres at Calvary temple, THI, 9 May). It is quite heartening that there are many such noble souls and NGOs who are coming forward to save our Covid affected fellow citizens with great compassion and kindness. Even during the first wave, it was philanthropists who fed the migrant labourers walking back to distant homes. Taking cue, all big churches, corporate schools, temples, mosques, function halls, huge buildings like Gandhi Bhavan, NTR Bhavan, Telangana Bhavan, BJP Bhavan etc, should be converted into free Covid isolation centres in the city with all the facilities, so that 2nd and 3rd waves can be tackled effectively. There is no use in criticising the governments of inaction. The society and people should come forward to save the humanity from Covid 19.

P.H.Hema Sagar; Old Alwal, Secunderabad

Laureus for Rafael Nadal

THE eagerly awaited Laureus Sportsman of the Year Award goes to the sportsman who best demonstrates supreme athletic performance and achievement during the year. The 2021 award has rightly gone to tennis great Rafael Nadal who won his 20th Grand Slam title. Nadal edged past all the competitors to win his 2nd Sportsman of the Year Award and 4th overall. His earlier three



awards were breakthrough of the year award in 2006, Sportsman of the year award in 2011 and Comeback of the Year Award in 2014. This is his 4th award overall. He has also been nominated four other times but was edged out by worthy awardees including Usain Bolt. Kudos Rafa.

C.K.Subramaniam, Navi Mumbai

Why is Delhi govt stripped of its representative power?

THIS refers to write up by Fatima Hasan on the need to introduce the Government of National Capital of Delhi (Amendment) Bill 2021 that got assent from the President of India to come into effect from 27th April 2021. Electorate of Delhi constantly witnessed

some sort of tug of war between the CM and LG on several small and irrelevant issues all the time. At times the issue became so serious, as to evaluate powers rested with each other, to assess true powers between these ‘two power centres’, and as a result the relevant and routine activities of the Delhi administration that often got delayed, to be put on the backburner to consternation of the general public, in the perpetual power tussle. And the author prudently said that there can be no swords in a scabbard that is impossible for a CM with a bloated ego.

Another vital and unmistakable aspect is the tendency of AAP to side with elements that are inimical to the Centre in their overall design of anti-nationalism, be it anti-CAA agitation that virtually blocked an entire stretch of a road in Delhi despite meaningful clarification and true intentions behind the move that were sincerely expressed by the Centre, and on the issue or the irrational farmers agitation on the stretch of the highway connecting Punjab, Haryana and Delhi in spite of well-meaning motive to revamp the agricultural sector in the country -- and the AAP was hand-in-glove with such anti-social and anti-national elements that was not expected of a democratically elected government in the country. It must be understood that the administration of Delhi will not have its hands tied as a result of the Amendment, in carrying out all legitimate, day to day people-friendly and routine administrative activities in the Union Territory of Delhi without any kind of interference or hindrance by the LG. The lingering doubt of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal is clarified once and for all, on the needless power equation that has been irking him so long as to who is bigger and powerful -- the CM or LG -- stands clarified with no scope for similar doubts arising in his mind on the issue.

S.Lakshmi, Hyderabad

thehansreader@gmail.com

BREAK THE CHAIN WITH VACCINATION: KCR

The Chief Minister holds a meeting with Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar and other officials of the Health and allied departments at Pragati Bhavan to review corona situation in the State

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

WITH the corona cases seeing rise and fall and even declining to some extent for a few days, Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao on Sunday instructed the top officials to check cases and break the virus chain through vaccination.

During a meeting held with Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar and other officials of the Health and allied departments at Pragati Bhavan to review the corona cases and treatment extended to infected patients, the Chief Minister reiterated that the government should break the chain by timely use of injections, oxygen, beds and fa-



cilities besides vaccination.

The State offered second dose to 6,31,985 people, includ-

ing 5,65,563 persons above 45 years age group, he said, adding that there was no need of lock-

down in the State. He instructed the officials to continue night curfew and not cause problems to people getting back home.

He said that night curfew was extended till May 15 to contain the spread of virus in the State. The Chief Minister asked the officials concerned to get more stocks of oxygen, injections from the Centre to tackle corona surge. He said that house level survey on corona cases and symptoms would be continued and medical kits would be provided.

The Chief Minister expressed content over decreasing cases and added that corona spread could be stopped if better treatment was extended.



Kothur municipal chairperson feted

HANS NEWS SERVICE
SHADNAGAR

TELANGANA Rashtra Samithi Kothur leaders Ravi Nayak and Govind Nayak on Sunday felicitated the newly-elected municipal chairperson B Lavanya Devender and vice-chairperson Doli Ravinder at Kothur Thanda. Senior TRS leaders exhorted the newly-elected members to work responsibly and resolve the issues faced by people in their areas. Municipal chairperson and vice-chairperson received a warm welcome and

were felicitated with garlands and shawls.

Speaking at the felicitation programme, municipal chairperson B Lavanya Devender promised to carry out development programmes in Kothur and make it an ideal municipality. She said all the elected representatives will work towards improving sanitation and other facilities in the municipality.

"We will fulfil all the promises made to people during elections," she said, urging the councillors to work unitedly for the development of Kothur. Later,

the municipal chairperson, vice-chairperson and councillors thanked everyone who worked for their victory in the elections.

TRS senior leaders Govind Reddy, Sadananda Goud, Katika Raju, Bandi Krishna, Dasari Narasimha, MD Mabul, Israel Khan, Kothur former deputy Sarpanch Masula Ramakrishna, Shankar Nayak, Tractor Ramulu, Devulla Nayak, Bhaskar, Srinivas, Sridhar, SK Rashid, Raju Nayak, K Laxmaiah, Karthik Reddy, Mekala Raghavendar Yadav, Laxman and others were present.

NHAI to set up 42 oxygen plants in AP

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

COMMISSIONER of Health Department Katamneni Bhaskar said here on Sunday that the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has agreed to set up 42 oxygen plants in the State.

He said in a statement that the NHAI had already started executing work on four sites initially one each at Amalapuram in East Godavari, Madanapalle in Chittoor district, Tadepalligudem in West Godavari district and Hindupur in Anantapur district. He said that Amalapuram plant and Madanapalle plant would be with a capacity of 5000 litres per minute (LPM), while Tadepalligudem plant and Hindupur plant would have a capacity of 1000 LPM. The commissioner said that the sites and the vendors were finalised for the remaining 38 sites.



Sabitha inspects Covid care centre

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIKARABAD

EDUCATION Minister Sabitha Indra Reddy along with MLC Mahender Reddy, Vikarabad MLA Methuku Anand, Tandoor MLA Pilot Rohit Reddy and District Collector Pausami Basu visited and inspected the 100-bed hospital at Rajiv Nagar Colony in Vikarabad district centre. Later, the Minister in-

spected the Covid care centre and Matha Shishu care centre in Tandur town.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that in the next three days, an RT-PCR test centre would be set up on the hospital premises. She directed the District Collector to set up oxygen beds in the hospital. Appealing to the people to wear mask, maintain social distancing and come out only in an emergency,

the Minister said in Vikarabad district, people can call on Covid helpline toll free number 18005996863 and get help.

Additional Collector Chandraiah, TSEWIDC chairman Nagender Goud, District Library chairman Murali Krishna Goud, Vikarabad municipal chairperson Manjula, Tandoor chairperson Swapna, party leaders and hospital staff were present.

Ex-MP donates oxygen concentrators

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIKARABAD

FORMER MP of Chevella Konda Vishweshwar Reddy, his sister and his niece donated 13 oxygen concentrators in Vikarabad on Sunday. About 25 oxygen concentrators were brought from Germany and 13 of them were donated to Maa Sharada Hospital. Speaking on the occasion, Vishweshwar Reddy said that the people of Vikarabad area should take advantage of this opportunity as free oxygen was being given to corona patients. He said he worked hard

to support people affected by corona. Mocking at Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao, Reddy said though a majority of States imposed lockdown, the Chief Minister was against imposing the same in Telangana for selfish reasons. Adding that the Chief Minister was not worried about growing infections and the lives of people, he opined that the government should impose lockdown immediately and provide better and timely treatment to those already suffering from the virus. JKMR Foundation and Yagna members and others were present.



Minister Koppula Eshwar tests Covid positive

His wife and daughter also contract virus

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

MINISTER Koppula Eshwar, who was tested positive for corona on Sunday, was admitted to the Yashoda Hospital in Hyderabad. After testing and diagnosis, the doctors confirmed the infection. The Minister soon was admitted in the hospital where a batch of expert doctors are treating him. His wife Snehalatha and daughter Nandini also tested positive. Meanwhile, the Minister asked the officials and others who came in contact with him to undergo Covid test. He asked people and his followers not to worry and take all precautions to stay away from contracting the infection.



High-level probe ordered into Mamillapalli explosion

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

MINISTER for Mines, Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Peddireddi Ramachandra Reddy on Sunday ordered for a high-level inquiry into the blasting mishap in the limestone mines at Mamillapalli village in Kalasapadu mandal in Kadapa district. The probe was entrusted to the committee of the officials of five departments. It may be recalled that 10 labourers working in the mine died in an explosion on Saturday morning.

Addressing the media at the Secretariat here, the Minister said that the officials of Mining, Revenue, Police, Mines Safety and Explosives departments would conduct the inquiry and the committee would submit its report in five

- The inquiry panel consists of officials from five departments
- Govt announces Rs 10 lakh ex gratia to the kin of each of the deceased
- Compensation of Rs 5 lakh each to be paid to those seriously injured



Peddireddi Ramachandra Reddy

days. Peddireddi said that Rs 10 lakh ex gratia to the families of deceased and Rs 5 lakh to the seriously injured persons would be paid from the District Mineral Foundation Trust.

He said that the preliminary report pinpointed at the negligence of the lease holder and the ex gratia to the families of

deceased would be paid by the lease holder as per the compensation act. The Minister said that all precautions would be taken to ensure that such mishaps do not occur in future and the lease-holders would be given necessary warning and direction not to violate the lease rights.

Andhra logs 22,164 cases, 92 deaths in 24 hrs

Active cases rise to over 1.9 lakh

AMARAVATI: Over 1.05 lakh sample tests turned out 22,164 fresh cases of coronavirus in Andhra Pradesh on Sunday, taking the gross to 12,87,603. In the 24 hours ending 9 am on Sunday, 18,832 patients had also recovered from the infection while 92 others succumbed in the State, according to the latest bulletin. The gross recoveries went up to 10,88,264 and toll to 8,707, the bulletin said. The number of active cases rose to 1,90,632. East Godavari district reported 2,844 fresh cases, followed by Visakhapatnam with 2,206, Chittoor (2,169), Guntur (2,099) and Anantapur (2,039) in 24 hours. Six districts reported between 1,200 and 1,800 new cases each while two more added close to a 1,000 each. Guntur district reported 12 fresh Covid-19 fatalities, followed by Vizianagaram (11), Visakhapatnam (10), East Godavari (nine), Anantapur and West Godavari (eight each).

e-passes to be issued from today

- DGP Gautam Sawang points out that lockdown is being implemented in the State between 12 noon and 6 am to contain Covid-19
- Appeals to people to strictly follow Covid protocols

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

DIRECTOR General of Police D Gautam Sawang said e passes (curfew passes) will be distributed to the people from Monday onwards in the State to attend the emergency cases in view of the Covid curfew being implemented in the State from 12 noon to 6 am.

He said the lockdown is being implemented to contain the Covid cases in the State. DGP visited some areas in Vijayawada on Sunday to assess the implemen-



DGP Gautam Sawang, Commissioner of Police B Srinivasulu and other officers inspecting the curfew in Vijayawada on Sunday

tation of curfew in the city. Later, briefing the media, Sawang said police department would take stern action against the people who violate curfew rules.

He made it clear that there is no permission for political meetings and public meetings in the State. He once again appealed to the people to follow Covid protocols and use double masks in public places. Sawang said Section-144 will be in force till fur-

ther orders to be given by the State government. He has appealed to the people to utilise 104 and 108 services to attend the emergency cases.

He said people must take permission to conduct the auspicious events like marriages. He appealed to the people not to believe the fake news and fake information circulated in social media on Covid cases and related news.

Oppn parties flay Modi, Jagan for dilly-dallying on Covid-19

- Demand that all the people should be vaccinated free of cost
- State govt should coordinate with pharma companies and take measures to increase oxygen production
- Corona patients should be given a monthly allowance of Rs 10,000 for six months
- Ask CM Jagan to convene an all-party meeting to discuss on coronavirus

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

THE Opposition parties including TDP, Congress, CPI and CPM in a virtual meeting on Sunday coordinated by Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee president Dr S Sailajanath came down heavily on the administration of Narendra Modi and YS Jagan Mohan Reddy for dilly-dallying over the fast spreading Covid19 in the country and the State.

CPM leader P Madhu, CPI leaders K Ramakrishna, Muppalla Nageswara Rao and Satyanarayana Murthy, TDP leaders K Atchannaidu, Nimmala Ramanaidu and K Pattabhiram and Congress working president Dr N Tulasi

Reddy participated in the virtual meeting.

The Opposition leaders said that the governments at the Centre and the State which are supposed to take the pandemic seriously and implement right steps to mitigate the suffering of people, are dilly-dallying over the issue with meaningless assurances. "Particularly the State government is whiling away time with Deevenas, Bharosas and cable wires," they pointed out.

The administration should take into consideration only one issue that is saving the lives of people, they said.

They said that the pricing of vaccination is three types, which is atrocious and the Central government totally forgot the universal vaccination policy. Narendra Modi refuses to

change his attitude though the whole world is criticising him.

The leaders said that though there was five months gap between the first wave and the second wave, the governments' lackadaisical attitude resulted in the present situation. The governments could not build even oxygen plants for people, they lambasted. Both Modi and Jagan are interested in elections but not in saving the lives of people. In this backdrop, the leaders put forward some demands.

All the people should be vaccinated free of cost by releasing adequate funds. The State government should take action to increase oxygen production by coordinating with pharma companies. The oxygen produced in the State should be used for the people

of the State before exporting to other places. The government should concentrate on curtailing the spread of coronavirus.

The corona patients should be given monthly allowance of Rs 10,000 for six months. The families of corona victims should be paid an ex gratia of Rs 10 lakh. Likewise, the families of frontline warriors should be paid Rs 50 lakh. The journalists should be included in the frontline warriors. The leaders appealed to the Central government to consider nation-wide lockdown in view of the spreading of the virus.

They demanded that Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy convene an all-party meeting to discuss the Covid-19 issue.

Mamata urges PM to waive taxes on medical equipment, drugs

Astonished to see Health Ministry’s extreme lethargy in combating crisis: IMA

KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Sunday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, requesting him to waive all forms of taxes and customs duty on equipment and drugs being used to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. Banerjee also urged Modi to strengthen health infrastructure and augment supplies of equipment, medicines and oxygen for treatment of coronavirus-positive patients.

“A large number of organisations, individuals and benevolent agencies have come forward to donate oxygen concentrators, cylinders, containers and COVID-related drugs. Many of the donors have approached the state government

to consider exemption of these from customs duty, SGST, CGST, IGST,” she said in the letter. “As the rate structure falls under the purview of the central government, I would request that these items may be exempted from GST/customs duty and other such duties and taxes to help remove supply constraints of the above-mentioned life-saving drugs and equipment and contribute towards effective management of the COVID pandemic,” Banerjee said.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that a 5 per cent tax on vaccines and 12 per cent on medicines and oxygen concentrators was necessary to keep costs low.

“If full exemption from GST (Goods and Services Tax) were given, the domestic producers of



these items would be unable to offset taxes paid on their inputs and input services and would pass these on to the end consumers by increasing their price,” she explained. Earlier, leading international medical journal The Lancet called upon the Modi-led government to “own up to its mistakes, provide responsible leadership and implement a public health response that has science at its heart to contain Covid”. As coronavirus infections continue to spiral out of control in India, in a strongly worded statement, the Indian Medical Association (IMA) said that the Union health ministry should “wake up” and make serious efforts to contain the spread of the virus. Accusing the health ministry of not taking appropriate action to deal with the current crisis,

the IMA Saturday said it is “astonished to see the extreme lethargy” of the ministry.

“TMA demands the health ministry to wake up from its slumber and respond to mitigate the growing challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic. IMA is astonished to see the extreme lethargy and inappropriate actions from the ministry of health in combating the agonising crisis born out of the devastating second wave of COVID-19 pandemic,” the IMA said in a statement.

As coronavirus infections continue to spiral out of control in India, in a strongly worded statement, the Indian Medical Association (IMA) said that the Union health ministry should “wake up” and make serious efforts to contain the spread of the virus.

WINDOWS

CRPF DIG under probe for abuse

NEW DELHI: An enquiry was initiated on Sunday against a Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) for allegedly misbehaving with a lady doctor of the force deputed in Bihar’s Muzaffarpur.

The enquiry was set up after the victim lodged a complaint against Surinder Prasad, the DIG Range Muzaffarpur in Bihar, on Sunday morning with concerned officials in the CRPF. In her complaint, the lady doctor complained that the DIG “made repeated phone calls late in the night followed by inappropriate advances at her place of stay in drunken state”.



In a joint operation, Army and police recovered 19 grenades in Phagla, Poonch district on Sunday

19 grenades recovered

JAMMU: Security forces recovered 19 grenades on Sunday in the Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir. Police said security forces including local police and 16 Rashtriya Rifles launched a search operation in Phaglin Surankote area of Poonch district after receiving specific intelligence reports.

“Security forces recovered 19 grenades which were hidden inside a natural cave. The recovery of these grenades has prevented the militants from using these for disruptive activities”, police said.

‘Heinous crime by Centre to export vaccines’

Delhi got 499 MT O2 against 700 MT; 23 patients go ‘missing’ from Hindu Rao Hospital

NEW DELHI

DELHI Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia Sunday attacked the Centre over the export of coronavirus vaccines, saying a large number of lives could have been saved in India if the doses were given to people in the country first. “It’s a heinous crime committed by the Central government to sell vaccines to other countries only for its image management at a time when people were dying in our own country,” he told an online briefing. Citing a newspaper report, Sisodia said the Centre sold coronavirus vaccines to 93 countries of which 60 per cent had Covid-19 under control, and also where there was no threat of loss of life due to the virus. A large number of youths in the country perished in second wave of the pandemic, he said, adding their lives could have been saved if the vaccines were given to them instead of exporting the doses.

Sisodia has ordered an inquiry into the incident of 23 COVID-19 patients going “missing” from the North Delhi Municipal Corporation-run Hindu Rao Hospital, official sources said on Sunday. Sisodia has asked the health department to conduct an inquiry into the matter and submit a report by Monday evening, they said. The corporation’s mayor, Jai Prakash, had on Saturday said that at least 23 COVID-19 patients left the hospital between April 19 and May 6 without informing the medical facility. Sisodia said it is very shocking that a large number of COVID-19 patients have gone “missing” from the hospital, a source said. Delhi received just 499 metric tonnes of oxygen on May 8 against the average supply of 700 MT ordered by the Supreme Court, AAP MLA Raghav Chadha said on Sunday. Around 80 medical personnel and a surgeon at Delhi’s Saroj Super Speciality Hospital have tested positive for the coronavirus over the last month. Dr AK Rawat, the surgeon who was vaccinated, died on Saturday. He was 58. Over the last week, the city got an average of 533 MT oxygen daily, which is 76 per cent of the quantity directed by the SC. India will approximately get 361 million doses of Russia’s vaccine Sputnik V’s by the end of March 2022 which can be inoculate an estimated 36 crore Indians, officials coordinating the entire vaccine measure in the country claimed.

India reported 4,03,738 new cases, 3,86,444 discharges, and 4,092 deaths in the last 24 hours



Deserted view of Shimla Railway Station during curfew in Shimla on Sunday

36 cr Indians to get Sputnik V jabs by Mar 2022

India sees over 4,000 Covid deaths for 2nd day

Curfew in entire J&K till May 17

SRINAGAR: Corona curfew was extended on Sunday for the entire Jammu and Kashmir for seven more days up to May 17. Authorities said the ongoing corona curfew which would end at 7 a.m. on Monday has been extended by another week till 7 a.m. next Monday. “The extended lockdown shall remain effective in all the 20 districts of J&K,” officials said. J&K has been reporting an alarming number of new Covid cases and deaths with each passing day.

On Saturday, 4,788 new cases and 60 deaths were recorded in the union territory. Reporting 60 Covid-related deaths in a single day is the highest number since the beginning of the ongoing pandemic.

Marriage events banned in Bhopal

BHOPAL: The Madhya Pradesh government has imposed a complete ban on holding marriage functions in Bhopal till May 17. This is one of the several measures taken by the state government to control the spread of coronavirus infections in the state.

The district administration has urged the general public not to hold such events in May this year.

Bhopal District Magistrate, Avinash Lavania, has issued orders to extend ‘Corona curfew’ in the district till May 17 as well as prohibited permission for allowing marriage events. The state government has banned marriage ceremonies across Madhya Pradesh in May this year to control Covid-19 infections.

‘Villages left to the mercy of God’

NEW DELHI: Amid surge of Covid cases in the rural areas, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday hit out at the Narendra Modi-led Central government for not tackling the situation.

“Shehron ke baad ab gaon bhi parmatma-nirbhar (After cities, villages also left to the mercy of God,” he said in a tweet, attaching an image of an Hindi caption reading “Covid-19: Mahamari ki dusri lahar ab gaon mein barpa rahi hai kehr (Covid-19: The second wave of the pandemic now overwhelming villages)”.

Gandhi had earlier tweeted the country doesn’t need a new house for the PM but oxygen, attaching photos of people in line for the life-saving gas, and work on the Central Vista.

Himanta Biswa Sarma to be next Assam CM

GUWAHATI: North East Democratic Alliance (NEDA) convenor Himanta Biswa Sarma is all set to become Assam’s next Chief Minister after being elected unanimously as the leader of the BJP Legislature Party and subsequently as the NDA Legislature Party on Sunday, central observer and Union Agricultural Minister Narendra Singh Tomar said.

Ending speculations on who would occupy the top post as both Sarma and outgoing chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal were contenders, the powerful NEDA convenor was elected as the legislature party leader, a week after the ruling

alliance won the assembly elections with a clear majority for the second successive term. Sources said Sarma was likely to meet Governor Jagdish Mukhi on Sunday evening to stake claim for the formation of the next government.

The swearing in of the new ministry was likely to be held on Monday at the Srimanta Sankardeva Kalakshetra.

Sarmas name was proposed by the outgoing Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal and seconded by BJP state party president and Patacharkuchi MLA Ranjeet Kumar Dass and newly elected Haflong MLA Nandita Garlosa.



BJP leader Himanta Biswa Sarma (left) who is set to be the next chief minister of Assam is greeted by outgoing chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal in Guwahati on Sunday

The swearing in of the new ministry is likely to be held on Monday at the Srimanta Sankardeva Kalakshetra

Seizure of 7 kg uranium: NIA takes over probe

MUMBAI

THE National Investigation Agency has taken over the probe into the recovery of natural uranium in Mumbai. A fresh case was registered in this regard by the anti-terror agency in pursuance of an order from the Ministry of Home Affairs.

According to the NIA’s spokesperson, the case has been registered under Section 24(1)(a) of the Atomic Energy Act, 1962.

Maharashtra Anti Terrorism Squad arrested two men on May 5 in possession of the radioactive metal. A total of 7.1 kg of natural ura-

nium worth Rs 21.3 crore was seized from the duo identified as Jigar Jayesh Pandya (27) and Abu Tahir Afzal Choudhary (31).

A case was initially lodged against the two at the ATS Kalachowki police station.

According to officials, Pandya and Tahir had been trying to sell off the uranium online for Rs 25 crore. The Maharashtra ATS sent a dummy customer and secured a sample of the substance.

Tests run on the sample by experts at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre confirmed that the substance was natural uranium.

TN’s new Health Min Subramanian is a marathon runner

Immediate imposition of a statewide lockdown to curb the Covid spread; 12,500 oxygen-supported beds being put together; Remdesivir to be sold in five more districts and triaging patients in the hospitals to ensure the ones in immediate need of medical attention are prioritised – these are some of the measures undertaken by the newly appointed Health Minister of Tamil Nadu MA Subramanian.

Subramanian was allocated the health department after the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) chief MK Stalin was sworn in as the new Chief Minister of the state. Helming the department at such a crucial juncture, the 61-year-old is being expected to

turn things around for the state and strengthen the government’s fight against the pandemic.

In a tragic turn of events, Subramanian lost his son, Anbazhagan, during the first wave of the coronavirus pandemic. His 35-year-old son was specially-abled and had recovered from the disease after battling with it for ten days in October. Soon after, he developed lung complications and died at the hospital. Subramanian has several feathers to his achievement cap. He has served as the Mayor of Chennai for five years from 2006 till 2011. A fitness enthusiast, he is a marathon runner and has a number of records to his credit.

He even entered the Asia Book of Records



by running a four-hour-and-eight-minute long marathon on his terrace during the lockdown that was announced last year. He said that since he was a regular at running marathons, he could not stay idle after the parks and playgrounds in the city were shut and thus turned his terrace into a running track.

The minister had run his first marathon at Auroville in 2014 and finished it in a mere two and half hours whereas the majority of the runners took three hours. Since then he has been participating in marathons and has run over 100 marathons till now, reported The Bridge. Reports mention that he was felicitated with an honorary doctorate by the World Records University for completion of 50

marathons in just three years. All these accomplishments were attained after Subramanian survived a horrific car accident in 2004 while traveling with his friends. He had suffered a skull injury and broken his knee bone. The doctors had even told him that he could never walk again, however, he beat the odds stacked against him with resilience and went onto clinch multiple records.

It is being said that a leader who understands the importance of and values fitness as well as knows the grief of losing a loved one will be empathetic to the distress calls of thousands in the state. Subramanian is believed to lead in giving a proper direction to the health-care management in Tamil Nadu.

“It’s not whether you’re right or wrong that’s important, but how much money you make when you’re right and how much you lose when you’re wrong”
—George Soros



HANS INVEST

Stocks.MFs.Bonds.Commodities



Fincare files for ₹1,330-cr IPO

NEW DELHI: Digital lender Fincare Small Finance Bank has filed preliminary papers with capital market regulator Sebi to raise Rs 1,330 crore through an initial share-sale. The initial public offer (IPO) comprises fresh issue of equity share of the bank worth Rs 330 crore and an offer for sale aggregating up to Rs 1,000 crore by promoter Fincare Business Services Limited, according to the Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP). This offer includes a reservation for subscription by employees.

The bank would utilise net proceeds from the fresh issue towards augmenting its Tier-1 capital base to meet future capital requirements. Further, a small portion of the proceeds will be used towards meeting the expenses in relation to the offer. Under the terms of the RBI final approval and the small finance bank (SFB) licensing guidelines, the lender is required to list its equity shares on the stock exchanges within a period of three years from reaching a net worth of Rs 500 crore.

The Bengaluru-based MFI-turned small finance bank started operations in July 2017. Before converting into a small finance bank, Fincare Small Finance Bank largely conducted business from two entities - Disha Microfin focused on the western region and the south-focused Future Financial Services. On May 3, Motilal Oswal Private Equity (PE) announced that it has picked up a minority stake in Fincare Small Finance Bank through a secondary acquisition worth around Rs 185 crore (\$ 25 million).

The investment was through India Business Excellence Fund-III, a fund managed and advised by Motilal PE. ICICI Securities, Axis Capital, IIFL Securities, SBI Capital Markets and Ambit Private Limited have been appointed as merchant bankers to advise the SFB on the IPO.

The equity shares of the lender will be listed on BSE and NSE.

Q4 results, Covid will weigh on mkts

Global cues also play key role; Lockdowns will adversely impact GST collections

CHERUKURI KUTUMBA RAO

Supported by the RBI's liquidity measures for Covid-hit sectors, hopes of containment of Corona through vaccination, rally in commodities and positive global cues including Biden's decision to waive intellectual property rights on vaccines, markets rallied for the second consecutive week. The Sensex climbed 424.11 points to 49,206.47 and the Nifty was up 192.05 points at 14,823.15. Observers expect broader markets to continue ongoing relative outperformance for some more weeks. FIIs have net sold more than Rs 5,000 crore worth of shares in May so far in the cash segment, in addition to Rs 12,039 crore of selling in April. Experts feel the outflow could continue if the situation deteriorates further which ultimately pressurises the economy.

On the economic front, April month's manufacturing and service PMI data came at 55.5 and 54. The numbers were higher than the market expectations due to a rise in export order in manufacturing and new order in service industry led to expansion in both the business activities. The April GST collection reflected the same outperformance as it soared to record Rs 1.41 lakhs crore, showing the economic resilience. However, economy observers expect that the ongoing restrictions in several States would affect the indirect taxes collection negatively which result in lower revenues in the upcoming months.

Due to continued rise in the Covid daily cases which surged above 4 lakh, the lockdown period in many states stretched further. Though there was no major impact of Covid second wave on markets yet, the news of strict lockdown in several states may deteriorate the sentiment ahead. Midweek announcement

of the RBI Governor announcing various measures as support to the economy and a liquidity facility of 50,000 crore to the healthcare industry was received positively by the markets.

Key companies like Apollo Tyres, Asian Paints, Escorts, Lupin, UPL, Vedanta, Cipla, Dr Reddy's Laboratories, Tata Power, Larsen & Toubro and Voltas will release quarterly earnings next week. Many recently listed companies like Happiest Minds Technologies, Polycab India, Rossari Biotech and Macrotech Developers will also come out with their numbers. Near trend in the market will be dictated by developments in Covid spread, Q4 earnings and global cues. Coming week is a holiday-shortened one with market closed for Ramzan Id on 13th.

Heard on the street

When everyone around you seems to be getting rich quick, it's hard to control your fear of missing out. But buying assets just because they're hot is a good way to get burned. Buy low, sell high. Is any investing advice more universal—or more universally ignored? That market axiom was made for times like these, when stocks are hovering near all-time highs, digital currencies are heading to the moon and commodity prices are surging. Yet, when several stocks seem to be breaking records every day, your emotions naturally prompt you to buy high, not to sell.

Even the world's greatest investors find selling harder than buying. Peter Lynch, former manager of the Fidelity Magellan fund, has said his "greatest mistakes" were selling at the wrong time. That's largely because of the unbearable feeling of FOMO, fear of missing out. Sell a winner too soon, and you have to



watch from the sidelines as it continues to soar. The most you could have lost from keeping it is 100 per cent, but the gains you can miss out on by selling too soon are unlimited. It hurts not to buy an asset that goes on to become a huge winner. But it stings far worse to sell one. That's an active decision, easier to imagine undoing.

Futures & options / sector watch

Stock specific action spurred brisk volumes in the derivative segment. Despite negative news flow of Corona, Nifty bounced back from lower levels and moved towards 15000 level during the week ended. On the option front, the maximum Put open interest was seen at 14,500 followed by 14,600 and 14,800 strikes while maximum Call open interest was seen at 15,200 followed by 15,000 and 15,100 strikes. Call writing was seen at 15,200, 14,800 and 15,400 strikes with Call unwinding at 14,700 and 14,600 strikes, while Put writing was seen at 14,800 then 14,500 strikes.

Analysts fear that if commodities continue to trade higher, inflation concerns may strengthen further fuelling debate about how long central banks can continue with loose monetary policies. Stay

invested for present in frontline metal counters like Tata Steel, JSW Steel, Vedanta and Hindalco. However, investors are cautioned that it will be a roller coaster ride from these higher levels. Impact of partial lockdowns and sluggish sales have begun showing impact on automobile companies. Book profits on bulges. Look out for stock specific opportunities in pharma and FMCG. Stock futures looking good are Adani Ports, Aarti Inds, IOC, NMDC, PNB, SBI Life, Tata Steel and Zee Entertainment. Stock futures looking weak are Bajaj Auto, Cipla, SRF, Tata Consumer and Powergrid.

Stock picks

Gufic Biosciences Limited is engaged in the manufacture of pharmaceuticals, medicinal chemicals and botanical products. The company has been known and respected for innovative and high quality pharmaceutical and herbal products along with a wide range of Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs).

It is one of the largest manufacturers of Lyophilized injections in India and have a fully automated lyophilization plant. Its lyophilized product includes Antibiotic, Antifungal, Cardiac, Infertility, Antiviral and proton-pump inhibitor segments. The company is now augmenting its global focus by deepening its presence in the priority markets of India, Germany, Switzerland, South Africa, Russia, Europe and key countries within the emerging market territories.

Why we are recommending

1. Lyophilisation as a concept will continue to grow globally as the process has benefits to improve quality and shelf life of injectable drugs.
2. Scope for increase in specific Antiviral drugs like Famcyclovir, Remde-

sivir and Thymosin Alpha for Covid-19 patients. Scope for defined protocol drugs such as Azithromycin, Doxycycline, Hydroxychloroquin and Tocilizumab.

3. The company has identified several peptides which has great market potential in segments like Immunity (Thymosin Alpha), Cosmetic dermatology (Botulinum toxin) Pain management (Botulinum Toxin), Fertility (Recombinant products) and several others products in the critical care segment. Several of these products would be first time launches and would be taken through proper clinical trials to get a market authorization in India and other countries identified.

Buy between Rs 140-150 for momentum medium term target of Rs 225. Keep stop loss at Rs 125. Risk / Reward ratio is 1:4.

Indian Sucrose Limited engages in the manufacturing and refining of sugar. The Company has two segments: manufacturing of white crystal sugar and cogeneration of power. The company's main products are sugar, molasses and bagasse. The company's plant is located in Hoshiarpur district of Punjab

Why we are recommending

1. High Ethanol capacity. Company moving aggressively into sanitizer segment.
 2. Present Market Capitalisation is less than 10 per cent of total sales.
 3. Benefitting from higher sugar prices and changes in government policies.
- Buy around Rs 29 for medium term target of Rs 43. In the event of strong correction in market keep stop loss at Rs 26. Risk / Reward ratio is 1:5.

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



K Naresh Kumar

Benefits of investing in REITs

Allocation in REITs should be in-line with the risk appetite, timelines and cash flow requirements of the investor while not exceeding 20% of the portfolio

An old adage says, "Land doesn't grow, so invest in it" and hence Indians have invested in real estate for generations but it does need large lump-sums to acquire good chunk of land/ property. The traditional structure of lending and borrowing restricts capital to be raised, deployed and distributed easily, dependent heavily on the conventional channels to execute projects in real estate. While residential properties are the first choice among many investors, some veer into commercial spaces like that of shops and office spaces but do need huge initial investments, not reachable for all.

A Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) is an entity that finances, owns and operates real assets to generate cash flows or income to the investors in these vehicles. They could simply be compared as a mutual funds investing in real estate, allowing the investors to pool capital to earn income from real estate without having to directly trade, finance any properties by themselves. This excludes the various exercises of identification, valuation, negotiation, buy or finance and maintain, while enjoying the returns from transacting in these assets. Investors could comfortably gain exposure to real estate without having to go through all these hurdles

and yet enjoy the benefits of returns through rental income.

All REITs are governed by the Securities Exchange Board of India (SEBI) that offers a framework on registration and regulation of REITs in India. Operationally, they seem like that of the MF where the pooled capital is invested in listed entities, REITs collect money from retail and institutional investors to transact in real estate assets like commercial spaces (shopping malls) and office spaces to generate regular rental income. Another popular offering is the mortgage REITs which participate in securitised loans where the interest received on these loans translates to an income.

The biggest advantage of REITs is the professional management like that of the MF, allowing right valuations of the assets, better negotiation of lease rentals, etc. to the table. This also economises the asset acquisition costs while making transaction seamless for the investor unlike directly dealing in physical property. This provides for much needed diversification for the investors in a very simple and convenient manner.

SEBI has directed the REITs to at least have 80 per cent of investments made into commercial properties that could be rented

out to generate income while the remaining (up to 20 per cent) can be held in the form of stocks, bonds, cash or under-construction commercial assets.

These are designed to distribute nearly 90 per cent of their earnings in the form of dividends to the

plifies the transaction. The listing on the exchange, however, is mandatory as per the SEBI regulations. The sale of these instruments attracts capital gains and over time as the trend catches up in this avenue, these instruments become highly liquid.

The biggest challenge REITs in India is the very attractive feature of distribution of income. With majority portion of its income is distributed, it restricts the ability to reinvest and hence become impediments to future growth. The other detrimental factor is the prevailing low rental yields. Of course, they are still in nascent stages of operation in India and are subject to risk of regulatory changes like that of the introduction of 10 per cent tax on dividends at the source of distribution. The global experience has shown that the extensive debt on their balance sheet could be prone to economic shocks and thus end up in losses. Allocation to these should be in-line with the risk appetite, timelines and cash flow requirements of the investor while not exceeding 20 per cent of the portfolio.

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



REIT investors. This provides for an enhanced and assured higher income yields. The new regulations allow for a pass-through status making them tax efficient. When REITs receive rentals and is distributed to its shareholder, it will be treated as pass-through flow and not taxed.

The financialisation of an otherwise cumbersome asset investing brings in ease of investment while also providing for a longer term cashflows for the investors. The very nature of the leases being long term provides a predictable income for a longer period. With the securitisation of hard assets and listing on the exchanges allows, sim-

Focus on midcaps for next few weeks

THOVITI BRAHMACHARY

The out-performance of the broader market keeps the market with positive momentum and alive. Even though the majority of states are under lockdown, the market discounted the Covid impact. The Nifty benchmark index reclaimed 14800 and closed at 14823 with 192.05 points or 1.31 per cent. The BSE Sensex up by 0.9 per cent.

The Indian stock market's consolidation continued for the 53rd day in a downward channel. After several failed attempts to break the support and resistances, it once again reached the near resistance area at the weekend. It formed an evening star Doji candle on Friday, which indicates indecisiveness. And open and close below the 14760 levels on Monday is a negative sign for the market, as per the Japanese candlestick studies. It exactly closed at the resistance area. It formed a similar candle on 8th April, which is also at the 14880-resistance area.

In simple terms, there is no significant weakness technically. It may have indecisiveness, and we need a bearish confirmation signal. In fact, Nifty traded mostly within the last week's range. The weekly range reduced to 447 from 623 points last week. It is still below the rising channel support, which is acting as a resistance. At the same time, on a daily chart, it still within the falling channel. On a bull case scenario, Nifty has to break 14880-15044 zone of resistance decisively to turn bullish bias.



The leading indicator, the weekly RSI is at 60.84. It has formed a higher low at 55.68. Watch this level for the next two to four weeks. So long as Nifty trades above this level, the market will either be neutral or bullish. On a daily chart, the negative divergence still present, a look for 56.61 - 58 zone will be crucial. A close above this zone and price breaking above 15044 is a very big positive for the market. The benchmark indices showing the sluggishness of the past three months. In comparison, the developed market is hitting the new highs, our market, after a 100 per cent gain in just 11 months, consolidating within five-seven per cent. For this small countertrend consolidating, it is consuming more time.

The seasonality charts also show the out-performance of midcaps in the month of May for 60 per cent of the time in the last 15 years. It's out-performance was mainly in April, 80 per cent which already witnessed. The other sector looking great in the current is consumption. Historically, this sector's out-performance comes in March, May and June months. So, these two are bright spots for the next few weeks. Within the consumption, the worst hit in the current situation is discretionary spending. Household essentials or FMCG

will out-perform in near future. Apart from these, the pharma/healthcare, chemicals, sugar, and agri-commodity sectors are looking good. The Relative Rotation Graphs (RRG), which shows the sector rotation, the 11 weeks data (since 16th Feb top), also shows the Pharma, FMCG, IT are in the improving quadrant as they are moving towards the leading quadrant. Avoid BFSI, Auto and Realty for now. The benchmark index has a history, topping cycle in the Jan-Mar quarter. In the last 21 years, 16 tops occurred during the January-March quarter. The current top made at 15431 is on 16th February, it seems the topping cycle history is repeating. At the same time, the doubling factor is also haunting the market now. Historically, whenever the benchmark index rose by 100 per cent from the bottom, it corrected 20 per cent.

Even as the trend follower, so the Nifty is making lower tops and lower bottoms, it's not wise to invest by looking at benchmark. The 14880-15050 zone of resistance tested several times in the recent past and failed. If Nifty falls below the 14200-269 zone of support, all historical evidence will reconfirm the Jan-March topping cycle. Hence, focus on the broader market, particularly, midcaps for the next few weeks.

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

DERIVATIVES OUTLOOK

DASARI SREENIVASA RAO

The resistance level remained at 16,000 strike for a consecutive second week, while support level moved up by 500 points to 14,500 strike. Holiday-shortened week (Eid-ul-Fitr on Thursday) may witness Nifty moving in a continued consolidation range. The highest Call OI is seen at 16,000 strike followed by 15,000/15,100/ 15,300/ 15,000/ 15,300 strikes. 14,800/15,100/15,200/ 15,400 strikes recorded reasonable addition of Call OI. Coming to the Put side, the 14,500 strike has the highest Put base followed by 14000/ 14,600/ 14800/14700 strikes. Other strikes 13800/

Nifty in consolidation range with positive bias

India VIX declines to 20 level; FIIs net sellers in index futures, buyers in stock futures and index options; Eid-ul-Fitr holiday on Thursday

14800/14500/114200 strikes witnessed considerable build-up of Put OI.

The options data holds that the Nifty still has the highest Call base at 15,000 Call strike for the coming weekly settlement. Since mid-March, the Nifty was unable to close above these levels. However, gradual writing at OTM Put of 14,600 and 14,800 strikes suggest limited downsides. Till these levels are held, there is a high probability that the Nifty could move towards 15,200 in the coming sessions.

Dhirender Singh Bisht, senior research analyst (derivatives) at

SMC Global Securities Ltd, said: "Highest Call concentration shifted from 15,000 strike to 15,200 strike and some Put writing was seen at 14,500 level, where highest concentration can be seen. Highest Open Interest band for current week is at 15,200 to 14,500 levels. Despite making lows below 14500 in the early part of the week, the NSE Nifty witnessed renewed buying support and rebounded strongly above the 14800 strike. Metals outshone the rest of the sectors in terms of performance as the metal index moved up almost 10 per cent last week. At the

F&O TRADING			
Product	Contracts	Turnover (Rs/cr)	Premium (Rs/cr)
Index Futures	2,53,985	23,977.10	--
Stock Futures	8,80,684	71,540.85	--
Index Options	1,86,66,508	17,81,668.63	17,321.81
Stock Options	20,31,456	1,71,848.69	4,506.06
F&O Total	2,18,32,633	20,49,035.27	16,767.12

NSE / As on May 7, 2021

same time, midcap, small cap indices also moved up nearly 1.5 per cent each."

"In the week gone by, some rally was seen in Nifty despite negative news flows about Corona spread. NSE Nifty bounced back from lower levels and moved towards 15,000 level. In the past week also some correction was seen from this level. Metal and commodities stocks showed some strength in the market whereas

profit booking was seen in PSU Bank," added Bisht.

For the week ended May 7, 2021, BSE Sensex closed at 49,206.47 points, a net recovery of 424.11 points or 0.86 per cent, as against 48,782.36 points. NSE Nifty too recouped by 192.05 points or 1.31 per cent and closed at 14,823.15 points from 14,631.10 points.

Bisht forecasts: "In upcoming week, the 15,000 will play a crucial resistance, which has substantial

Open Interest concentration and it is also a psychological level. On the technical front, below 14,700 level, we could witness further selling pressure and it may persist and drag Nifty towards 14,500 zone whereas on upside, the 15,000 level plays as resistance in upcoming week."

Sectorally, apart from metals, the rest of the sectors have remained largely range bound to positive. For the Nifty to move above 15000, the banking index has to lead from front. Analysts predict that after a round of consolidation it is well poised for a further up move. They expect banking space to resume its out-performance once it closes above 34000. However, technology space is likely to underperform.

Volatility in the markets de-

clined to 20 level, which is the lowest level for volatility since mid-April. Sustainability of current levels may infuse fresh uptrend in the broader markets in the coming sessions. As suggested earlier, one should be cautious if it starts moving higher once again.

"The Implied Volatility of Calls closed at 20.98 per cent, while that for Put options closed at 21.17 per cent. The Nifty VIX for the week closed at 22.04 per cent. Put-Call Ratio of OI for the week closed at 1.47 and this indicates more Put writing than Calls," remarked Bisht.

In the F&O space, FIIs sold Rs 5,408 crore index futures, bought Rs 2,386 crore stock futures and Rs 8,636 crore index options.

Bank Nifty

The NSE's banking index Bank Nifty closed at 32,904.50 points, a net gain of 122.70 points or 0.37 per cent from 32,781.80 points.

IPL suspension shows game's vulnerability, T20 WC could be postponed or shifted'

NEW DELHI

AUSTRALIAN great Ian Chappell feels the suspension of IPL is a reminder of cricket's vulnerability and does not rule out the COVID-19 pandemic forcing a postponement or shifting of the upcoming T20 World Cup from India.

The 2021 edition of the lucrative T20 league was suspended earlier this week after four players -- Sunrisers Hyderabad batsman Wriddhiman Saha, Delhi Capitals spinner Amit Mishra and KKR's Varun Chakravarty and Sandeep Warrier -- tested positive for COVID-19 in the bio-bubble.

"The suspension of the 2021 IPL tournament because of surging Covid infections and deaths among the public,

and a number of participants testing positive, was a reminder of the game's vulnerability," Chappell wrote in his column for 'ESPNcricinfo'.

India, which is grappling with a devastating second wave of the pandemic with cases rising by over 4 lakh every day, is scheduled to host the T20 World Cup in October-November.

"In the current disastrous climate, the suspension of the IPL could also produce a precedent. It may lead to the World T20 event, programmed for India later in the year, either being postponed or moved," Chappell recalled a few incidents that led to the disruption of the game in the past.

"In the past, tours have been aborted and matches abandoned for a variety of

reasons. Many of these involved backstories, some of which were tragic and others amusing." The 77-year-old recollected how poor weather during the 1970-71 Boxing Day Test between hosts Australian and England led to the first ever One-Day International.

"In 1970-71 the MCG Boxing Day Test between Australia and England was abandoned without a ball being bowled after heavy rain ruined any chance of a competitive match.

"That led to the first ever ODI being played in lieu of the Test in an effort to recoup some of the lost revenue. The match was agreed between officials of both countries without the players being consulted, and this angered many in the England camp.

"It was yet another arrow in the players' quiver in the build-up to the World Series Cricket (WSC) revolution in 1977-78. WSC is portrayed as an Australian uprising but that belies the fact that more than 50 players from many different countries were among the original signees."

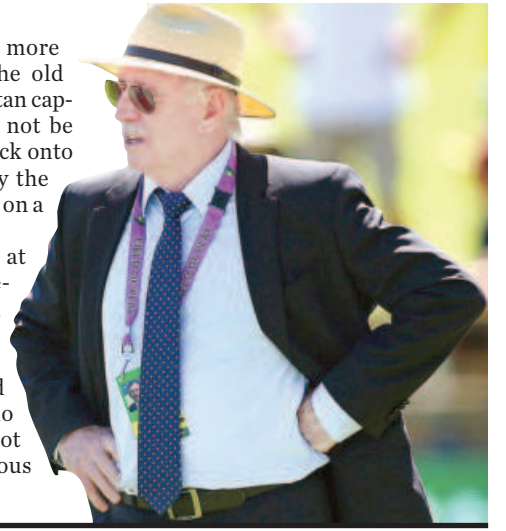
The former Australia skipper also wrote about the time when Pakistan players forfeited a Test in 2006 against England over ball-tampering allegations.

"In 2006 the fourth Test between England and Pakistan came to a premature end with much recrimination. Pakistan forfeited the match after refusing to take the field when the team was accused of ball-tampering and penalised

five runs.

"Despite cricket employing more sheriffs than you'd find in the old American Wild West, the Pakistan captain, Inzamam-ul-Haq, could not be coaxed into taking his team back onto the field. After a lengthy delay the match was awarded to England on a forfeit," he said.

"In a disgraceful attempt at compromise, the ICC subsequently declared the match a draw in 2008. "However, integrity finally won out in 2009 when the decision was reversed at the behest of the MCC, who quite rightly claimed that to not uphold the laws set a dangerous precedent," Chappell said. (PTI)



Covid Protocol Breach at AFC Cup

Bengaluru FC asked to 'leave immediately'

Group D matches postponed; ATK Mohun Bagan report two positive cases

MALE/NEW DELHI

IT was a chaotic Sunday for Indian football as Bengaluru FC was asked to leave Male for violating COVID-19 safety protocols ahead of their AFC Cup play-off against Eagles FC, while all Group D fixtures in the same event stood postponed hours after ATK Mohun Bagan reported two positive cases.

The Asian Football Confederation did not give any reason for postponing the matches but it is understood that the deadly resurgence of Covid-19 in many Asian countries is behind the decision.

It all started with Bengaluru FC's play-off match against Eagles FC, scheduled here on May 11, being left in doubt after the host country's sports minister asked the ISL side to leave citing breach of Covid-19 protocols.

The exact nature of the violation by BFC, which is captained by India skipper Sunil Chhetri, was not specified but sports minister Ahmed Mahloof termed it as "unacceptable". The sentiment was echoed by BFC owner Parth Jindal, who apologised and promised strict action against the errant players and support staff.

"Unacceptable behavior from @bengalurufc breaching the strict guidelines from HPA (Health Protection Agency) & @theafcdotcom. The club should leave Flag of Maldives immediately as we can't entertain this act," Mahloof tweeted from his official handle.

"We have informed FAM that we cannot hold the match, and asked them to make arrangements for @bengalurufc's departure. We will be in further correspondence with AFC through @MaldivesFA to postpone the group stage."

The minister's tweets came after reports emerged that some players of the side were seen roaming Male's streets in violation of the quarantine protocol. Also, two ATK Mohun Bagan players - Prabir Das and SK Sahil -- tested positive for COVID-19, hours before their group matches in Maldives were postponed by the continental football governing body.

"Participating clubs who have travelled to Maldives will be required to arrange for their return home while adhering to the COVID-19 health and travel protocols put in place by the



country," the AFC said in a statement.

"At the same time, the AFC is in contact with all other participating clubs and officials who have not entered the Maldives to cancel their travel arrangements." The other two teams in Group D are Bashundhara Kings of Bangladesh and Maziya Sports & Recreation of Maldives. "The AFC Cup (South) Group Stage matches are now postponed until further notice with more information to be announced in due course," the AFC said.

ATK Mohun Bagan were to open their campaign on May 14 against the winner of Tuesday's play-off between Bengaluru FC and Club Eagles. Maldives' sports minister asked BFC to leave after, along with other reports, Channel Nine Maldives posted a photo of BFC's Australian import Erik Paartalu walking on a street in Male.

Jindal apologised for the "inexcusable behaviour of three foreign players/staff" and promised strictest action against them. The BFC had been granted special permission to be in Male despite the ban on tourists from India because of a COVID-19 surge there. The players and staff were required to be confined to their hotel at all times except when going for training and the matches.

Apologising for the behaviour of his

players, Jindal said he will ensure such events do not happen in future. "On behalf of @bengalurufc I am extremely sorry for the inexcusable behaviour of three of our foreign players/staff while in Male - the strictest action will be taken against these players/staff," he tweeted. "We have let @AFCup down and can only say that this will never happen again."

Maldives was the host for the play-off match and all the Group D matches as AFC wanted single venues in view of the pandemic. "We honoured the commitment we gave a few months back even with the surge in cases & pressure from the public," Mahloof said in another tweet.

The ATK Mohun Bagan positive cases came to light after all the team members underwent Covid-19 tests at a private hospital in Kolkata on May 7. Under the AFC protocols, competing players have to produce Covid-19 negative reports two days before departure from their home base.

"Yes, Prabir Das and Sahil have tested positive and so they will be left out. All others have negative results," a source in the ATKMB team told PTI on conditions of anonymity. ATKMB were scheduled to leave for Maldives on Monday but that plan stands cancelled after the AFC's announcement. (PTI)

Strongly believe we've best medal chance in Tokyo Olympics, says Manpreet

BENGALURU

THE Indian men's hockey team is clocking long hours in the sun to be ready for the heat and humidity that awaits them in Tokyo during this year's Olympics, says skipper Manpreet Singh who is confident that his team will peak at just the right time.

India have won eight Olympic gold medals in the past, but their last top finish came way back in 1980 Moscow Games. "We strongly believe we have the best chance to win a medal at the Olympics and this belief is keeping everyone motivated and optimistic," Manpreet said on the occasion of the 75-day countdown for the Tokyo Olympics which opens on July 23.

"Our training has been planned in such a manner that we peak at the right time and also we are clocking long hours in the sun to get our bodies acclimatised to the hot conditions in Tokyo."

The skipper, however, said that the



postponement of FIH Pro League matches against Germany and Spain due to coronavirus has been a big setback for the team. "When the FIH Pro League matches against Germany and Spain too were postponed, we were extremely disappointed because those matches would have certainly helped in our preparations.

"But we understand these are really unprecedented times, and there are travel restrictions in place," Manpreet said.

Meanwhile, Indian women's hockey team captain Rani Rampal is relieved that all seven players, who had tested positive for COVID-19 recently, will resume training from next week after recovering from the deadly virus.

Rani and six other players, including Savita Punia, Sharmila Devi, Rajani, Navjot Kaur, Navneet Kaur and Sushila had tested positive for the virus upon their arrival here for the national camp after a 10-day break. (PTI)



NEW DELHI

Bumrah can take 400 Test scalps, he's 'so different' than any bowler I've seen: Ambrose

WEST Indies fast bowling great Curtly Ambrose says Indian pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah is "so different" from all other bowlers he has seen and has the potential to reach the 400 wicket milestone in Tests if he manages to stay fit. Ambrose, who took 405 wickets in 98 Tests at an outstanding average of 20.99, said from the current Indian lot, Bumrah has impressed him the most.

"India's got a few good fast bowlers. I'm a big fan of Jasprit Bumrah. He's so different than any bowler I have seen. He's so effective and I'm looking forward to him doing really well," Ambrose said on 'The Curtly & Karishma Show' on YouTube.

Asked if the 27-year old can scalp 400 wickets in the longest format of the game, Ambrose said, "He is as long as he can remain healthy, fit and play long enough. He can seam the ball, swing the ball and bowl great yorkers."

"He's got a lot in his arsenal. So as long as he can remain on the park for a long period of time, I'm sure he can get up there," Ambrose added.

Bumrah, who made his Test debut in 2018, has snapped 83 wickets in just 19 Tests at an impressive average

of 22.10, quickly becoming a vital cog in the Indian team's scheme of things. Ambrose, who along with compatriot Courtney Walsh made the most lethal opening bowling pairs of all time, feels the Indian speedster, with his short run up, puts a little more strain on his body.

"You know in terms of fast bowling, it's generally about rhythm. So, you need to build a good rhythm before you can deliver."

"Bumrah has got a very short run up. He walks most of the way and maybe one or two or three little jogs before delivery. So, it simply means he may be putting a little more strain on his body but if he can remain strong enough, I think he'll be ok."

"It's just about him staying strong to accompany that short run up. If he can do that, he'll go the distance," Ambrose added.

India is set to take on New Zealand in the inaugural World Test Cup final from June 18 to 22 in Southampton next month and Ambrose feels a good opening partnership will be crucial for Virat Kohli's men.

"It will be very important that the opening batsman lay the foundation because if you lose 1-2 wickets pretty early you exposes captain (Virat) Kohli and the others guys in the middle order. "So if you get a solid platform from the openers I am sure it will make life a lot easier for the middle order and the team can put up a good total," Ambrose added. (PTI)



City lose 2-1 to Chelsea, made to wait for Premier League crown

LONDON

MANCHESTER City will have to wait at least 24 hours before they are crowned Premier League champions for this season after they lost 2-1 at home to Chelsea on Saturday evening.

A win for Pep Guardiola's men would have assured the title, but now they need Manchester United to lose away to Aston Villa on Sunday to confirm their crown after losing to their fellow Champions League finalists at the Etihad Stadium Xinhua reports.

Guardiola made plenty of changes to the side that beat Paris Saint Germain on Tuesday but saw his side take the lead through Raheem Sterling on the stroke of halftime.

It should have been game over moments later when City was awarded a penalty, but Kun Aguero tried to score a chipped 'Panenka' style penalty only for Chelsea keeper Eduardo Mendy to stand tall and make an easy save. Chelsea improved drastically after the break with Hakim Ziyech taking advantage of good work by Christian Pulisic to level with his left foot.

Marcos Alonso put down a marker for the Champions League final with a finish into the top corner of the net after excellent work from Timo Werner.

Sabalenka beats world No.1 Barty, wins Madrid Open

MADRID



ARYNA Sabalenka turned the tables on world No.1 Ashleigh Barty to win the Madrid Open title.

Sabalenka, one of the biggest hitters on tour, powered her way through the final in three games for a 6-0 3-6 6-4 triumph and a 10th career title on Saturday, DPA reports. Two weeks ago, Barty came from a set down to defeat Sabalenka in the final of the WTA event in Stuttgart, and it looked as if history would repeat itself on Saturday when the Australian assumed the momentum going into the deciding set here.

Barty had not lost a match on red clay for nearly two years since before she won her maiden grand slam title at Roland Garros in 2019. She had no answer to the power of her 23-year-old Belarusian opponent in the first set here, though, as Sabalenka produced the shots that have seen her tipped as a future slam champion for several years.



"A premium Co-Living Space"

PROPERTY MULTIPLIER
WITHOUT ADDITIONAL INVESTMENT

KT Residency approved by  Approved No. PO2400001598

SAFE

Earn extra sft*

AFFORDABLE

9% to 11% Returns

NO MAINTENANCE

Assured rental income for 20years

+91 95337 76694

www.ktresidency.com | sales@kapilproperties.com