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Last chance?



Can Sonia stand by her assurance?



By Our Political Correspondent

Now the latest talk is that All India Congress Committee commanded by Sonia Gandhi & Co will apply its mind to resolving the issue of granting statehood to Telangana region; immediately after the conclusion of current budget session of Parliament, by 10th May. By then, the results of Karnataka assembly elections too will be out and as most of the surveys point to the possibility of Congress forming the next government there, it could be celebrations time at the AICC head quarters.

Well, the two issues are inter-related as they indicate a favourable condition to Congress high command to take a clear decision on a vexed issue like Telangana. Now that the Parliament has already passed the budget for 2013-14 by a voice vote, there is no threat of the UPA government falling due to pulls and pressures of allies or rivals in the Parliament.

Naturally, this should give enough elbow room to the Congress Party President Sonia Gandhi to take a call on Telangana. Optimists like Union Minister Sarve Satyanarayana and Palvai Goverdhan Reddy are saying that she has already made up her mind and an announcement on granting T-State would be made after the Budget Session of Parliament. Even MPs like G Vivek, Gutta Sukhender Reddy and Ponnampaluri Prabhakar too are of the same view. One should not distrust their optimism, though we have a long record of Sonia Gandhi dithering on this issue, especially since December 9th, 2009 when the then Union Home Minister P Chidambaram made a statement saying that the process

of Telangana state will be initiated.

In the last three years and five months, many 'deadlines' have come and gone without any indication of what's in store for future. Very recently, Union Home Minister Shushil Kumar's all-party meeting on December 28th, 2012 and a deadline of one month from then on, i.e. till January 28th, 2013 too had passed off. Now, with every Tom, Dick and Harry tired of making every kind of predictions; what all is left is just one person who matters and her decision. The congress party's supremo Sonia who has kept her mouth tight lipped without uttering a single word is bound to make her say something. If at all she chooses to honour her promise made to the people of Telangana, at the time of seeking votes in 2009 general elections; then she has only one last chance to take a decision on Telangana – and that too between middle of May, so that all procedures prescribed under the Constitution can be completed in the Winter Session of Parliament scheduled in November this year. Perhaps, it could also be the last session of the 15th Lok Sabha that began in June 2009.

Legislative Process under Article 3 of the Indian Constitution:

There will be an elaborate procedure under Article 3 of the Indian Constitution to carve out a new state of Telangana by seeking to divide Ten districts of the present Andhra Pradesh state. Firstly, the Congress party has to take a formal political decision on forming a new state of Telangana. Then, the Union Cabinet comprising of congress

concerned AP State Legislative Assembly for its opinion within a specified time period. After expiry of the specified time period therein, the Union Cabinet shall begin the process of preparing a Bill which will be placed before the Two Houses of the Parliament for its approval. Only then statehood to Telangana region could become a reality.

Therefore, only if Sonia Gandhi desires, the Centre will act, and the present AP Legislative Assembly can be expected to actually give its non-mandatory approval. Once that formality is over, the Centre will introduce it in the Parliament in November when there will be a winter session. Perhaps that may be the last session of this Lok Sabha as it goes to Elections in April 2014. Once the Election Commission issues a poll notification for next Lok Sabha, there will not be any legislative business in the Parliament.

So, all indications point to a possible decision of Sonia Gandhi taking a decision on granting statehood to Telangana by the end of this month, May 2013. As already, the BJP and other national parties have extended their support to the T-state, there will not be any problem in passing the Bill in the Parliament.



AP affairs clumsy:

This seems possible as the affairs of Congress in Andhra Pradesh are not satisfactory. Chief Minister Kiran Kumar Reddy is getting alienated within the cabinet day by day. Many ministers including Deputy CM Damodar Rajanarsimha, Transport Minister and APCC chief Botsa Satyanarayana, other senior ministers like Jana Reddy, DL Ravindra Reddy, Anam Ramnarayan Reddy, C Ramchandraiah, have ganged up as dissidents and have decided to call on the high command in the next week or so to lodge a complaint against Kiran Reddy's style of functioning. According to them, Kiran's unilateral handling of policies is going to ruin the party in the upcoming elections. They are particularly unhappy over the manner in which the CM had introduced two schemes – "Bangaru Talli", a program meant for benefiting girl children and "Amma Hastam", a scheme to supply 8 essential commodities at a subsidized price of Rs 185/- per month to all below poverty line families.

Already, there are complaints that these two schemes cannot be implemented properly. In many districts, the commodities supplied under Amma Hastam are not of good quality and that there is no clarity on Bangaru Talli scheme also. Not only that, the CM is least bothered about consulting his cabinet colleagues about any policy matter.

Both Ravindra Reddy and Jana Reddy

criticized openly that if these two schemes go wrong, they will severely damage the image of Congress. Already, there is an opinion among public that late YSR was a better CM as far as implementation of welfare schemes are concerned. If these two schemes fail, people will further get closer to YSR Congress. Some senior congress leaders are suspecting "if Kiran is doing all these to benefit Jagan indirectly besides promoting his image".

Even, Sonia knows that the party cannot win many MPs in Andhra Pradesh, if it goes to polls under the chief ministership of Kiran Kumar Reddy. Many Congress ministers and MLAs are still hopeful that the CM would be changed very soon. But, if Sonia is afraid of changing the CM, the best way to ensure party victory is granting Telangana state.

T-Congress MPs Dharna:

This was also reflected during the 48 hour dharna staged by Five Congress MPs from Telangana – G Vivek, Manda Jagannatham, S Rajaiah, Ponnamm Prabhakar and Gutta Sukhender Reddy inside the Parliament premises this week. None of Sonia's emissaries have called on the protesting MPs, but they were not evicted and were provided with all facilities like drinking water and air-coolers.

The high command is aware of the offers and pressure mounted on the MPs by TRS chief K Chandrasekhar Rao who is keen on inviting them into his party



fold at the earliest. KCR has openly said that at least 3 MPs and 10 MLAs are going to join him by the end of May. He is in touch with these MPs.

Manda Jagannatham and S Rajaiah have almost decided to join TRS on April 27th, when the party celebrated its 12th anniversary at Armoor in Nizamabad district. But, Sonia's aide Ahmed Patel got in touch with Jagannatham and Rajaiah and requested them not to leave Congress. Sources say that Ahmed Patel has told the MPs that Sonia is going to announce her decision on T-state very soon.

The Congress high command is also aware that the TDP which was almost decimated in Telangana sometime back is picking up again in the region. The desertion of two TRS leaders – Chada Suresh Reddy and Mekala Sarangapani into TDP is an example to this. So, naturally, Congress is worried about revival of TDP in Telangana.

As already, BJP and CPI have announced their support to the separate statehood demand, now Congress cannot afford to miss this last chance to spell out its stand in favour of T-state. Sonia may spell out something by the end of this month. Let's watch out till then. ♦

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Coalgate exposes nexus between CBI & Central Government

By Shivkant

Coal allocation scam is a political scandal concerning the Indian government's allocation of the Nation's coal deposits to Public Sector Entities (PSEs) and private companies by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. In a draft report issued in March 2012, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) office accused the Government of India of allocating coal blocks in an inefficient manner during the period 2004 – 2009. Over the summer of 2012, the opposition BJP lodged a complaint resulting in a Central Bureau of Investigation probe into whether the allocation of the coal blocks was in fact influenced by corruption.

The essence of the CAG's argument was that the Government had the authority to allocate coal blocks by a process of competitive bidding, but chose not to do so. As a result, both Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs) and private firms paid less than they might have otherwise required to pay. In its draft report in March, the CAG estimated that the "windfall gain" to the allottees was Rs 10673.03 billion (US \$ 200 billion). The CAG Final Report tabled in Parliament put the figure at Rs 1855.91 billion (US \$ 34 billion).

On 27th August 2012, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh read out a statement in Parliament rebutting the CAG's report both in its reading of the law and the alleged cost of the government's policies. While the initial CAG report suggested that coal blocks could have been allocated more efficiently, resulting in more revenue to the government, at no point did it suggest that corruption was involved in the allocation of coal. Over the course of 2012, however, the question of corruption has come to dominate the discussion.

In response to a complaint by the BJP, the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) directed the CBI to investigate the matter. The CBI has named a dozen Indian firms in a First Information Report (FIR), the first step in a criminal investigation. These FIRs accuse them of overstating their net worth, failing to disclose prior coal allocations, and hoarding rather than developing coal allocations. The CBI officials investigating the case have speculated that bribery may be involved.

The issue has received massive media reaction and public outrage. During the monsoon session of the Parliament, the BJP protested the Government's handling of the issue demanding the resignation of the Prime Minister and refused to have a debate in the Parliament. The deadlock resulted in

Parliament functioning only seven of the twenty days of the session. The Parliamentary Standing Committee report on Coal and Steel states that all coal blocks distributed between 1993 and 2008 were done in an unauthorized manner and allotment of all mines where production is yet to start should be cancelled. The BJP on April 19th demanded the resignation of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh alleging that he was using the Law Ministry to save himself from the probe. All the 142 coal blocks were allocated during the Prime Minister's tenure in the coal ministry.

PIL on Coal Scam

Advocate M L Sharma filed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in the Supreme Court seeking to cancel the allotment of 194 coal blocks on grounds of arbitrariness, illegality, unconstitution-

not following the 2004 policy of "competitive bidding" for coal block allocation. The apex court wanted to know not only the steps that have been taken but also proposed against companies that have breached the agreement.

On March 13th, 2013 Supreme Court bench responded to rare display of divergence between center and premier investigation agency CBI by asking its director not to share details of coal block scam investigations with political executives and report only to the court. It further ordered the CBI Director to file an affidavit by April 26th stating that probe status report filed before it had been vetted by him and its contents were not shared with the political masters and "the same arrangement shall follow in future".

to their favoured entities". "There has been mounting evidence... for the last one year as to how major corporate groups like Jindals were able to garner huge blocks with millions of tonnes of coal, as was the case with shady companies linked with other politicians. Despite that, CBI has neither filed any charge-sheet nor made an arrest "the application stated.

CBI Affidavit & the role of PMO

On April 26th, the CBI Director Ranjit Sinha submitted an affidavit in the Supreme Court stating that the coal scam status report prepared by the investigating agency was shared with the Law Minister Ashwani Kumar "as desired by him", joint secretary-level officers from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and the Coal Ministry before presenting it to the court on



ality and public interest. Defending the CAG, a Supreme Court bench of Justices R M Lodha and A R Dave dismissed the Solicitor General Rohinton Nariman's objections that petition relies heavily on the CAG report by saying, the CAG is a "Constitutional Authority" and that its report is "not a piece of trash". Moreover, the court ordered the government to inform it of reasons for

Later on, two applications were filed by NGO Common Cause and Manohar Lal Sharma on 13th April 2013. Senior Advocate and Activist against Corruption Prashant Bhushan, sought creation of a special investigation team to probe the case as it involved "very powerful personalities in the present government who were either in charge of the allocation process or who influenced the process to get allocation

March 8th. A bench headed by Justice R M Lodha observed that there was a 'very disturbing feature' in the affidavit filed on April 26th by the CBI Director Ranjit Sinha and the agency must be restored to its independent position. "On what basis an assertive statement by the CBI, through Additional Solicitor General, was made that status report has not been shared with anyone and it was meant for court alone," asked the bench.

Ranjit Sinha, in his two page affidavit filed in the apex court, had said that the agency's status report on coal allocation scam was 'shared' with Law Minister Ashwani Kumar and senior officials of the PMO and Coal Ministry 'as desired by them.' The apex court said that sharing of information with the government about the probe into the scam has 'shaken the entire process' and CBI need not take instructions from 'political masters' on their probe.

"Very disturbing feature is there in affidavit. Why was the court kept in the dark about sharing the probe report with government? You don't need to take instructions from political masters," the court told the CBI. The three member bench headed by Justice Lodha observed: "Our first exercise will be to liberate CBI from political interference. CBI's independent position must be restored, it said.

On April 13th, the CBI was inclined to inform the Supreme Court that the controversial probe status report had been vetted by the Law Minister. In his affidavit, the CBI Director had said, "I submit that the draft of the same (status report) was shared with the Law Minister as desired by him prior to its submission before the Supreme Court. Besides the political executive, it was also shared with one joint secretary level officer each of Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of Coal as desired by them."

The CBI Director had also assured the apex court that the agency will not share further status reports in this case with any member of the political executive. Sinha's affidavit had contradicted the claim made by Additional Solicitor General Haren Raval on behalf of CBI on March 12th that the probe report in the scam has not been shared with any member of the government and it has only been shared with the apex court after being vetted by the CBI director. The affidavit was filed in compliance with the Supreme Court's order which, in an unprecedented move on March 12th, had directed the CBI director to assure the court that the status report in the Coalgate scam is not being shared with the government. Today's hearing came a day after Raval shot off a letter to Attorney General G E Vahanvati in which he alleged that he has been made a 'scapegoat' in the matter. Raval is also believed to have accused Vahanvati of trying to interfere in CBI's probe report. Earlier, the CBI and the Centre had clashed over the Coalgate scam.

The agency had told the court that there have been 'arbitrary allotments without scrutiny' in the coal blocks allocation during the UPA-I tenure. The government had refuted its findings saying that the 'CBI is not the final word on this.' In the status report filed by CBI on March 8th, the agency had said that the coal block allocation during 2006-09 was done without verifying the credentials of the companies which allegedly misrepresented facts about themselves and no rationale was given by the Coal Ministry in giving coal

blocks to them.

Way back in 1997, a bench of the then CJI, the late JS Verma, listed about two dozen guidelines, which, had they been implemented properly, would have ensured independence and autonomy of the investigating agency. Sixteen years later, successive governments have managed to circumvent the guidelines, issued as part of the famous judgment in the Jain Hawala Case, and continue to treat the CBI as just another wing of the government. CBI Director Ranjit

giving the CVC power of superintendence over the investigating agency. However, sometime back, Justice Verma talked of the need to make it mandatory for the CBI to report only to courts as far as investigations were concerned. He was only reinforcing the general feeling that the CBI was susceptible to the government's influence. It contradicts the claim made by CBI counsel in the Supreme Court that the coal scam report was not shared with any member of the government. On April 29th, CBI stated to the apex

status report in the Coalgate scam, has landed the UPA in a soup, derailing Parliament functioning; the Congress is adopting a cautious stance. The party in fact is waiting for the apex court's verdict on May 8th. Law minister Kumar met party spokespersons and senior Cabinet Ministers, explaining his stand. Kumar's meeting with party men was crucial as partymen say "it was becoming extremely difficult to defend Ashwani Kumar in the face of all that was being reported." What was also of great concern was that in the wake of this controversy, important bills such as the Food Bill and the Land Bill were being scuttled as the Opposition disrupted Parliament every day demanding the resignation of the Law Minister. Explaining his case to some fellow Union Ministers Jairam Ramesh, Pawan Kumar Bansal, Jayanthi Natarajan and party spokespersons, Ashwani Kumar insisted that he has made only "one or two minor changes". When asked "whether any PMO officials were present at the meeting" he had stated that apart from the AG, ASG, CBI Director and another CBI official nobody else was present. Kumar's rationale for not making a statement explaining his stand in the wake of these allegations has been that, he might be accused by the Opposition of influencing the CBI which is expected to submit its affidavit on May 6th.

Sources say that Kumar attempted to defend his actions, telling the party men, that he has been made "collateral victim". Insiders who were present at the meeting and did not want to be quoted maintained that he was "increasingly becoming a liability" for the party. The controversy which has already resulted in the resignation of ASG Harin Raval who blamed the Attorney General for making him a "scapegoat" and lying before the court, has also seen the Law Minister Ashwani Kumar claiming that he did not call the CBI Director to the meeting. There is now a full blown breach between the government and its Law officers.

Several Congressmen however think otherwise and would like Kumar to save the party even if it means sacrificing his berth in the cabinet. The Law Minister's political future and his tenability in the cabinet are linked to the apex court's verdict on May 8th. The Law Minister has been taking the stand that he had called the meeting with the Law officers to arbitrate on differences over whether the CBI report should be an affidavit or submitted in a sealed cover to the court as it pertained to matters of an ongoing investigation.

Whether the Law Minister gets a boot or benefit of doubt is something for the Apex Court to determine. But what is more important is that it's high time the CBI's umbilical chord with the Central Government is chopped off with surgical precision. The mood of the people is very much in that direction. The CBI being a bureaucratic setup can be brought under CAG or CVC or even under some judicial body that can be specially created. ♦

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Vinod Rai : CAG is out of the BAG

Sinha's protests that he had not committed any wrong, since the "Law Ministry is the statutory mandated legal advisor of CBI/Department of Personnel and the Law Minister is not the political executive in terms of administrative control of CBI" is just another example of how the UPA treats a supposedly independent agency like the CBI. Justice Verma's judgment had intended to bring the CBI out of government control by

court that 20% if it's original report was changed by Government.

Congress confused about Ashwani's future

The congress party in show of solidarity amidst dithering sought to defend Union Law Minister Ashwani Kumar who's now controversial meeting with the Attorney General, ASG and his alleged interference with the CBI's



India fails to save Sarabjit

Two days after death row Indian convict Sarabjit Singh was admitted to Jinnah Hospital in Lahore in Pakistan, on April 28th, his elder sister Dalbir Kaur who went there to see her brother in coma, asked the doctors about his condition. They just simply laughed at her. "I smelled then only that he was already dead," Kaur told dozens of TV channels in Delhi. This was proved right, after a second postmortem conducted on Sarabjit in Amritsar in Punjab on Friday established the fact that he was attacked by his fellow prisoners with a clear intention of brutally killing him. His vital organs were missing and ribs were smashed and skull was broken with hard objects.

All this will not happen when some innocent fight breaks up between inmates of jail. Ever since, Sarabjit was seriously attacked and injured in high security Lahore jail, the attitude of Pakistan government was all suspicious. First, they lied that his condition was not that bad and later they dilly-dallied on providing him with consular access of Indian officials.

When finally India mounted pressure on Pakistan for handing him over to it, for better medical treatment; without informing anyone, the doctors in Pakistan had removed the ventilator of Sarabjit Singh, thus literally ending the life of a 51 year old innocent Punjab Dalit farmer, who had two dependent daughters and a wife back home.

Sarabjit's case, right from his arrest to

trial and conviction of death sentence and subsequent languishing in Pak jail for 23 years is a clear testimony of clumsy handling of India - Pakistan diplomacy. If Pakistan has deliberately acted cruelly and brutally, the role of the Indian foreign affairs ministry too is not unblemished.

On Thursday, we have seen how Prime Minister Manmohan Singh helplessly cried in Parliament that his repeated pleas to Pakistan to set free Sarabjit on humanitarian grounds. How can a nation of 121 crore population feel confident that their interests are safe in the hands of a government, if they watch their PM pleading helplessness in Parliament?

But, this is the state of affairs. Ever since Sarabjit, who in a drunken condition mistakenly, entered Pakistan territory, just 10 km from his village in Punjab on August 30th, 1990; he was charged with spying and intent to create terror and was flimsily sentenced to death on August 23rd, 2005. Thousands gathered in Amritsar and protested the death sentence, but Indian government has kept mum.

At least five times his mercy petition was rejected by both Pakistan Supreme Court and the President of Pakistan in the last eight years. Several Pakistani Presidents and Prime Ministers visited India during the period, but never did Indian political executives put pressure on Pakistan over Sarabjit Singh's release. It was one of the issues, casually raised by India and Pakistan conveniently



ignored it.

Sarabjit Singh's case is only an example of how casual the Indian political system functions when it concerns less privileged citizens in India. The failure of Indian foreign affairs ministry in handling grave matters with neighbouring countries is also deplorable. Our record with other countries like Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal and Maldives too is far from satisfactory. Of course, thankfully, our relations with Bhutan are cordial.

The latest incident of an attack on a Pakistani prisoner Sanaullah in Jammu and Kashmir Jail is an indication of growing trend of people's losing faith in legal system. This is not good. Both India and Pakistan should sit together and review the cases of all 550 and odd

prisoners of each other nation and immediately release the innocents through a joint bilateral mechanism. But now, every member of the present union cabinet and those who held the responsibility in the past must all bend their heads in shame for their gross incapacity to value a life of a citizen whose mistake was not knowing the borders of his nation. Our constitution empowers sovereign rights on our citizens and the sad thing is our citizens are not informed about our national borders. This is a gross failure on the part of our political masters who take no responsibility to safe guard the lives of "Aam Admi" but take pride in exploiting them at every available opportunity. ♦

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Can TDP join hands with BJP again?

I have gone through your last week's cover story and I found it quite interesting and it rightly predicted that TDP will be benefitted if it join hands with the BJP as BJP is supporting the cause of Telangana very strongly. It's a fact that TDP and BJP were strong allies in the past and they can perform well if they have an alliance in the upcoming elections. Its quite appealing to me that TDP will be desperate to win maximum Assembly seats and the BJP will be eyeing maximum possible Lok Sabha seats as its confident of forming the next central government under the leadership of Narendra Modi. I personally believe that it will be a win-win situation for both the parties and both the parties will surely strengthen themselves in the state as well as the centre if they have a poll alliance. I would be happy to see this past alliance partners to tie again to defeat



congress lead UPA government both at centre and state levels.

T Santosh Singh, Khairtabad

Hidden Agenda of Chota Mota Netas joining BJP?

I am a regular reader of Deccan Post and I like the innovative and unique analysis published usually in your esteemed publication. As I hail from the Goshamahal constituency I really got impressed with the analysis published with the title 'Hidden Agenda of Chota Mota Netas joining BJP?'. The whole story was the mirror to the prevailing situations in this area and it appears that the politicians can go to any extent for their political survival and getting power by hook or crook. It would be foolish to expect some ethical politics from the politicians especially in urban areas like Hyderabad city and every damn politician

just want to win the elections and do not bother about the problems of the people. But people are now well informed and surely not going to tolerate the gimmicks and will teach a lesson when the time comes.

Ramesh Kumar, Jambagh

Sham & Shame Chacko must exit from JPC

With reference to your last week's editorial I totally agree with the opinion of the editor that the present Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) Chairman PC Chacko must exit immediately as he grossly failed to for a proper investigation and just tried to save the present UPA led congress government and its just because he too belongs to the Congress Party. Chacko has not even gave an opportunity to A Raja, the then Telecom Minister to be heard before the JPC and it appears he was in a

hurry to give a clean chit to P Chidambaram, the Union Finance Minister and Manmohan Singh in 2G scam. It is pathetic to say the least that how the prime minister of this country or his office would not know about the 2G allocations and it seems PC Chacko is trying to shield the PM and the congressmen who are involved in this. I believe that

PC Chacko should immediately resign and show some respect for the democracy and the parliamentary system.

Dr Snehalatha, E-mail

Readers are requested to send in their feedback to mail@deccanpost.net



Manmohan Singh leading a 'Stinking and Sinking' Cabinet?

By Sridhar Rama

It is usual for the opposition parties to make allegations of bribery against the Ministers whenever lapses occur. But the manner in which the central government headed by the Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh since past nine years is adopting evasive tactics is a bigger tragedy than many other problems the nation is facing today. As one youngster, Varun Gandhi, a BJP MP pointed out "that a new record of scams has been created during the congress led UPA regime" and "a modern history of corruption has been created in the regime of the UPA government headed by Dr Singh and despite all this, Sarabjit could not be saved because of its lax policy". Well this is not something which can be an outburst of a young BJP leader. This reflects the disgust of the middle classes who know not what this government cares for them but feel that the present lot of political masters only care about their wealth and their welfare.

The latest news of the CBI arresting Vijay Singla, a multi-millionaire businessman from Chandigarh who is the sister's son of the Union Railway Minister Pawan Kumar Bansal, in Chandigarh on 3rd May, for allegedly accepting a bribe of Rs 90 lakh for fixing a top-level position in the Railway Board has further lowered the much eroded trust quotient of the scam tainted union government headed by Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh. Beset with a series of scams smacking of huge corruption running into loot of tens, hundreds and thousands of Crores, the last few days saw the Indian Parliament shut down by angry opposition protesting the

insensitive attitude of the Prime Minister and his cabinet colleagues in facing upto allegations of soft pedaling by PC Chacko heading the JPC probe seeking to dilute the culpability of the Prime Minister in the 2G telecom scam. The alleged manner in which the Union Law Minister Ashwin Kumar has interfered with the CBI investigation of the Coalgate scam is now a matter of controversy engaging the attention of the apex court. The fate of the Law Minister surviving in his post depends on the outcome of the Supreme Court's decision on 8th May.

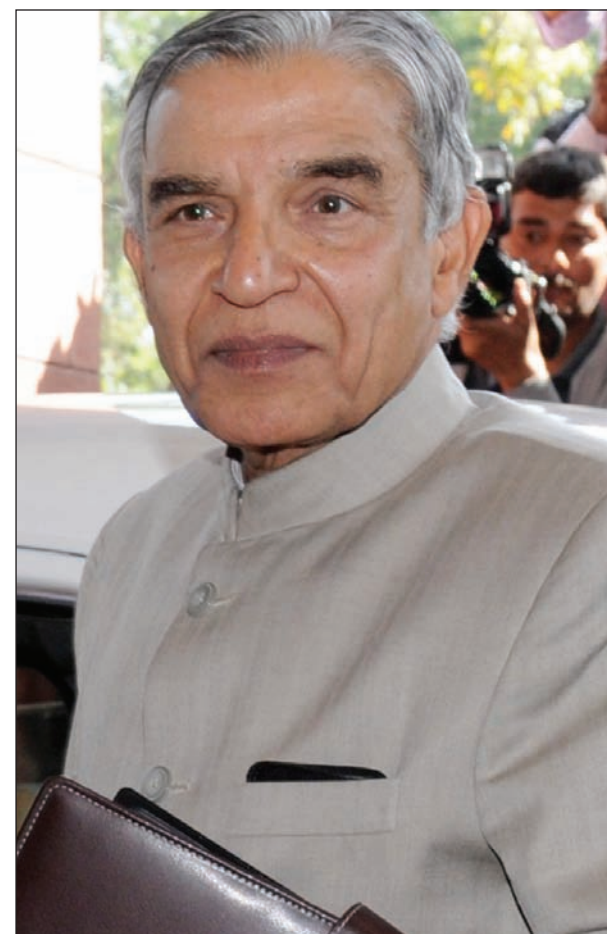
While the entire opposition in both the houses of the Parliament were busy stalling the proceedings of the respective Houses demanding the resignation of the Union Law Minister and as well as the Prime Minister over their interference in the investigation by the CBI into the Coal scam; the arrest of Railway Minister's nephew by the CBI for an alleged favour shown by PK Bansal is bound to turn into a lethal weapon for the opposition to strike the ruling UPA.

Now, the latest revelations involving bribes being offered to the Railway Minister's nephew and ironically brought to light by none other than the CBI is the biggest anti-climax to the ongoing soap opera. Along with him, the alleged bribe giver, Railway Board Member Mahesh Kumar, has been arrested. Senior officials said that Bansal's nephew accepted the bribe in cash from Manjunath, a conduit of Mahesh Kumar, who was recently promoted as Member (Staff) and was trying to get a lucrative position as Member (Electrical). The

arrests have come as a huge embarrassment for the Congress as Bansal is the first party man to take charge of the coveted Railway Ministry in over a decade. In an operation kept under wraps, the CBI kept a tab on Kumar's movements and phone calls and swooped down on Singla at the time of bribe payment. Mahesh Kumar was General Manager (Western railways) and promoted recently as Member Railway Board, a post equivalent to Secretary in the Government of India.

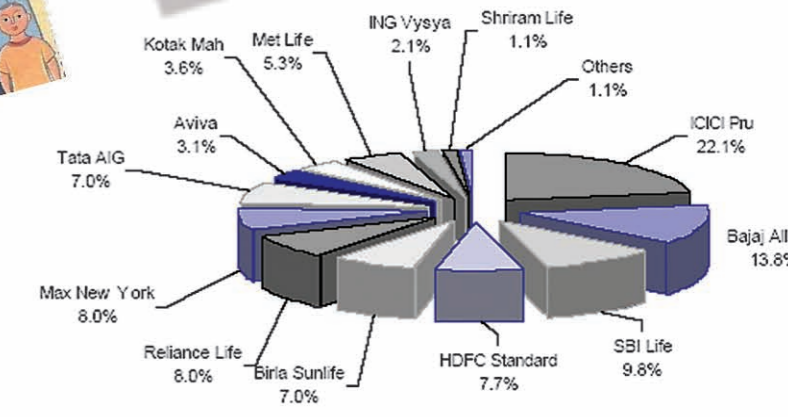
The congress core committee sat for two hours to discuss the latest controversy involving Railways Minister Pawan Kumar Bansal. He is known to have told the Prime Minister and also the party chief Sonia Gandhi that he had not been in touch for a while with Singla, his nephew, who has been arrested for allegedly accepting a Rs 90-lakh bribe from a man who wanted a key posting on the Railways Board so badly that he was willing to pay Rs 10 crore for it. The much hurt MP from Chandigarh, Bansal has also offered to resign. He has been claiming that he did not discuss postings in his ministry with his nephew, Vijay Singla. The party has not decided yet whether PK Bansal should quit office or continue. But this episode adds to the list of scams that have plagued this government. The government that is beleaguered by an array of corruption scandals in the areas ranging from sports, telecom, coal, defense and now the railways, gets added to that list. What next is the question intriguing everyone's minds? ♦

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Insurance Sector - a Boon or Bane



By Jaywant Naidu

Insurance is a subject listed in the Union list in the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India. Insurance has been mentioned in the writings of Manu (Manusmriti), Yagnavalkya (Dharmashastra) and Kautilya (Arthashastra). It's all about pooling of resources that could be re-distributed in times of calamities such as fire, floods, epidemics and famine. In the year 1818, Oriental Life Insurance Company was started by Anita Bhavsar in Kolkata to cater to the needs of European community. In the year 1870, Bombay Mutual Life Assurance Society became the first Indian insurer. In the year 1912, the Life Insurance Companies Act and the Provident Fund Act were passed to regulate the insurance business. The Life Insurance Companies Act, 1912 made it necessary that the premium-rate tables and periodical valuations of companies should be certified by an actuary. The oldest existing insurance company in India is the National Insurance Company Ltd., which was founded in 1906. The Government of India issued an Ordinance on 19th January 1956 nationalizing the Life Insurance sector and Life Insurance Corporation came into existence in the same year. The Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) absorbed 154 Indian, 16 non-Indian insurers as also 75 provident societies - 245 Indian and foreign insurers in all. In 1972, with the General Insurance Business

(Nationalization) Act was passed by the Indian Parliament, and consequently, General Insurance business was nationalized with effect from 1st January 1973. 107 insurers were amalgamated and grouped into four companies, namely National Insurance Company Ltd., The New India Assurance Company Ltd., The Oriental Insurance Company Ltd and the United India Insurance Company Ltd. The General Insurance Corporation of India was incorporated as a company in 1971.

PRESENT SITUATION IN INDIA:

Currently, India is a US \$ 41 billion Insurance Industry. Only about two million people (0.2% of the total population of 1 billion) are covered under Mediciam, whereas in developed nations like USA about 75% of the total populations are covered under some insurance scheme. The Insurance Act of 1938 was the first legislation governing all forms of insurance to provide strict state control over insurance business. The government introduced the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Act in 1999, thereby de-regulating the insurance sector and allowing private companies. Furthermore, foreign investment was also allowed and capped at 26% holding in the Indian insurance companies.

EDUCATION IN INSURANCE SECTOR:

In 2006, the Actuaries Act was passed by the

Parliament to give the profession statutory status on par with Chartered Accountants, Notaries, Cost & Works Accountants, Advocates, Architects and Company Secretaries. The industry recognizes examinations conducted by IAI (for actuaries), III (for agents, brokers and third-party administrators) and IISLA (for surveyors and loss assessors). TAC is the sole data repository for the non-life industry. NIA, Pune, has a 32 acre campus & 50-plus faculty, specialized in teaching, conducting research and providing consulting services in the insurance sector. NIA offers a two year PGDM program in insurance. NIA was founded as Ministry of Finance initiative with capital support from the then public insurance companies, both Life (LIC) and Non-Life (GIC, National, Oriental, and United & New India).

Amity School of Insurance Banking and Actuarial Science (ASIBAS) of Amity University, located in Noida and established in 2000, offers MBA programs in Insurance, Insurance and Banking, and M.Sc./B.Sc. Actuarial Sciences. The Institute of Insurance and Risk Management (IIRM) is an International Education and Research Organization. The Institute was set up jointly by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA) of India and the State Government of Andhra Pradesh, in 2002 for promotion of International Post Graduate Diploma Courses in Insurance/Risk Management (Regular and Distance learning). International School of Actuarial Sciences (ISAS) opened on 6th August 2007 leading to a Post

Graduate Diploma in Actuarial Sciences. Birla, a graduate business school located in Greater Noida, established in 1988, offers a PGDM-IBM program in insurance business management. This program was launched in 2000 by the Centre for Insurance and Risk Management and is accredited by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority.

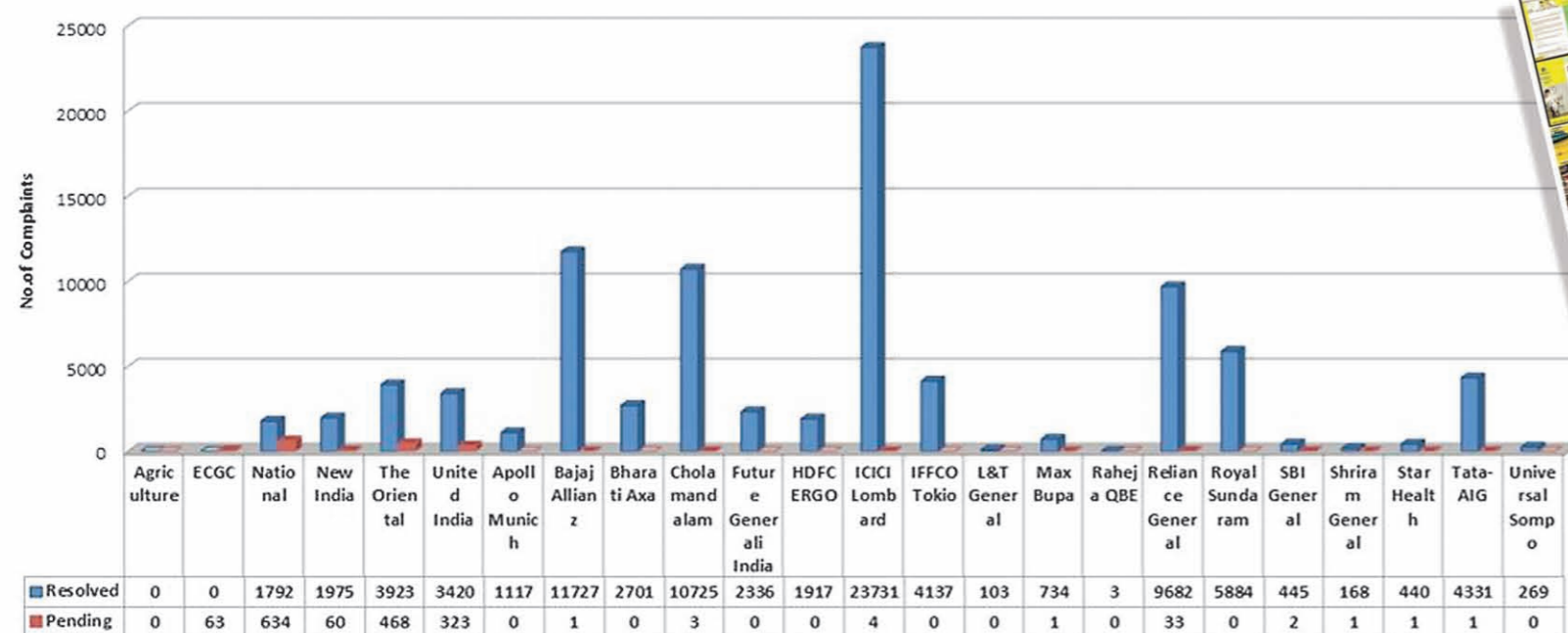
Life Office Management Association (LOMA), USA is BIMTECH's educational partner and BIMTECH is an approved centre for LOMA examination. The Chartered Insurance Institute (CII), UK has accorded recognition (by way of credits) to the BIMTECH PGDM-IBM program. Their two year PGDM program in insurance business has been recognized as equivalent to the Associate level of the Insurance Institute of India, Mumbai. NLU, Jodhpur, offers a two year MBA and one year MS (for engineering graduates) program in insurance.

THE INSURANCE LAWS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2008:

The insurance sector is a colossal one and is growing at a speedy rate of 15 - 20%. Together with banking services, insurance services add about 7% to the country's GDP. A well-developed and evolved insurance sector is a boon for economic development as it provides long-term funds for infrastructure development at the same time strengthening the risk taking ability of the country. The Insurance



MOVEMENT OF COMPLAINTS (NONLIFE) INDUSTRY WISE FOR 2011-12



BEWARE OF INSURANCE FRAUDS:

Indiaforensic Center of Studies estimates that Insurance frauds in India costs about \$ 6.25 billion annually. Insurance fraud can be classified as either hard fraud or soft fraud. Hard fraud occurs when someone deliberately plans or invents a loss, such as a collision, auto theft, or fire that is covered by their insurance policy in order to receive payment for the damages. Soft fraud is an opportunistic fraud wherein policy holders exaggerating otherwise legitimate claims. Life insurance fraud may involve faking death to claim life insurance. Fraudsters may sometimes turn up a few years after disappearing, claiming a loss of memory. Health insurance fraud is described as an intentional act of deceiving, concealing, or misrepresenting information that results in health care benefits being paid to an individual or group. Automobile insurance fraud may fake traffic deaths or stage collisions to make false insurance or exaggerated claims and collect insurance money. The frauds sometimes start at application of policy stage itself. Inadequate or false disclosure of medical conditions, family health history, and other prerequisite concerns when applying for the policies. To stay within a certain age range on some coverage policies, or to remain within a lower premium threshold, Birth Certificates and other

proofs are found to be frequently modified to show reduced ages for clients. Death Certificates have also been subject to frequent manipulation. In the health insurance field, medical bill forgery has fast become a rampant issue for insurers to contend with. Frequent manipulation of the necessary doctor credentials, and recommendations on certain policies, and trying to subvert certain medical screening, and pre-conditions tests. Non-stating the necessary vehicle accident history, before applying for a motor insurance policy.

Is insurance sector, the risk provider or a risky provision?
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Brahmotsavams in Rishikesh



The annual brahmotsavams of Sri Venkateswara Swamy Vari Temple in Hrishikesh will take place from May 21 to May 30 said TTD EO Sri L.V.Subramanyam. He has released the posters of Brahmotsavams on Monday at Sri padmvathi Guest House in Tirupati. Speaking on this occasion he said that special programmes such as cultural and spiritual will be organized by TTDs Hindu Dharma Prachara Parishad, Dasa Sahithya Project and Annamacharya Project during Brahmotsavam. TTD is all

set to organise these brahmotsavams in a grand manner. As a part of this mega religious fete, there will be Dwajorohanam on May 22, Garuda Seva on May 26, Rathotsavam and Kalynotsavam on May 29 and Chakrasnanam on May 30 said the EO. TTD JEOs Sri P.Venkatrami Reddy, Sri K.S.Sreenivasa Raju, DyEOs Sri TAP Narayana, Sri Chinnamgari Ramana and others were also present.



SUDOKU 268

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

How to play : Fill in the grid so that every horizontal row, every vertical column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9, without repeating the numbers in the same row, column or box. You cant change the digits already given in the grid. Every puzzle has one solution.

ANSWERS Sudoku-267

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

www.sudoku-puzzles.net

Answer 267 : Sudharshan Reddy, Vidyanagar

Laugh out loud

Teacher :
What happened in 1869?
Student: Gandhi ji was born.
Teacher :What happened in 1873?
Student: Gandhiji was four years old.

Question:What is the fullform of maths.
Anwser: Mentaly affected teachers harrasing students

Teacher : Now children , if I saw a man beating a donkey and stopped him then what virtue would I be showing ?
Student : Brotherly LOVE

Teacher :Because of Gandhiji's hard work what do we get on 15th August.
Student: A holiday

Teacher :Tomorrow there will be a lecture on Sun.Everyone must attend it.
Raju:No ma'm! I will not be able to attend it.
Teacher :Why?
Raju: My mother will not allow me to go so far!!!

Teacher:"Can anyone give me an example of Coincidence? "
Johnny: ."Sir, my mother and father got married on the same day same time."

Teacher: How old is ur father.
Sunny:As old as I am.
Teacher:How is it possible?
Sunny: He became father only after I was born

If d birthdate on ur birth certificate was rubbed of then...
Wat wud be ur name ???
A railway station beggar meets another beggar.A software engineer meets another software engineer. Both of them ask the same question to each other.
What is the question?
"So, which platform are you working on?"

ASTRO FOCUS

May 5 - 11, 2013

Aries: You are likely to have beneficial contacts with other people and have positive feelings come up for you in regards to important interpersonal relationships. Persistence and endurance are the keys to success now. Investment made in new ventures is likely to bring good returns. A sudden romantic development with someone you have known for long might come as a surprise.

Taurus: It is going to be an active week for getting things done. You will feel determined to improve your position in your job and career and work sincerely towards achieving your objective. You will receive some earlier dues that will call for celebrations. You would be rewarded handsomely for your efforts.

Gemini: It is a proper time to focus on duty, responsibility and scheduling. Financially your situation will look up with some profitable deals on the anvil. Your shrewdly conceived strategy has worked wonderfully well surprising your rivals who never suspected your moves. You are required to handle the situation diplomatically.

Cancer: Your feelings will be favorably reciprocated and a deep and meaningful relationship will ensue. Success and Honours received through your own efforts will make you self-confident and proud of your achievements. This week your dedication and hard work puts you in the limelight. Put maximum efforts on creative projects, which promise you long-term gains.

Leo: This week a rendezvous with an influential person provides you with new direction and goals. Financially, most of you would feel so secure as to fly in the sky of your dreams. You may receive some invitations for a social event. You would become socially very active during this time frame. Involvement with groups or associations is likely to draw your attention.

Virgo: A feeling of boredom and monotony may pervade your work schedule. In business you will be able to maintain your normal level of profits without much effort but some additional hard work can yield results. You would also acquire new techniques and skills during this period. Love life will take an interesting turn both for the married and the single.

Libra: This week some good event revitalizes your energy. You would move ahead with the right initiative and finish off many pending proposals and jobs. Your sense of responsibility and a mature approach will help in sorting out some complex problems. Increasing opportunities to exhibit your knowledge and skills will bring you name and fame.

Scorpio: Entrepreneurs will receive a fresh proposal that will help them to expand their enterprise. You may have to take some time off your busy schedule to sort out certain confidential matters. New ventures and important plans would also be formulated later in the week. You feel ambitious and willing to take on responsibilities and gain experience that will pay off later.

Sagittarius: This week you would have more energy than you normally do and you should use it in a constructive manner. You should try to make best use of your time, opportunities and energy. A reputation built now is likely to be solid. Romantic influences in your chart will make you feel strongly drawn to someone at your workplace.

Capricorn: Perfect week to participate in seminars and social functions. You would be highly appreciated if you focus on the welfare of all those around you. This is likely to be extremely beneficial week and a marked improvement in your financial resources is indicated. Love and romance remains on the top of your agenda, so what if you find no time for amour this week.

Aquarius: Money will come from work and projects. There could be a significant promotion in career. You will be full of enthusiasm and achieve excellent results in whatever you undertake to do this week. This is the time to intensify your wisdom so that it can be used at the proper time in the proper way. Your feelings about family and relationships may be somewhat strained. Romance would be exciting, but prove expensive to your pocket. Health needs care, so avoid late night parties and hard drinks.

Pisces: His is a time to put down roots and establish solid foundations, a good time to better organize your life. You are required to remain at a low profile and avoid all confrontations. It is just a matter of time and things will be in normal shape very soon. You would like to do anything to secure your profits. You may have to travel on work this week. The employed may get an opportunity to voice their demands.

Love all, Hate none

Krishnamachari Srikkanth, Former Opening Batsman for India was in Hotel ITC Grand Kakatiya to launch the Talent Hunt of young cricketers for Sunrisers Team by RN Club. He spoke about his time, on and off the cricket field to Deccan Post.

What's special about Hyderabad in your life?

My cricketing career literally started in Hyderabad. I scored a century in the junior state circuit and thus got into Ranji debut in the year 1978. I scored 90 and 37 runs batting for South Zone against the visiting Pakistan side led by the charismatic Imran Khan. After being appointed as the Chairman of Selectors in 2008, the first match I watched officially happened to be in Hyderabad Board President's 11 vs Australia.

Of late, we do not see the talent of good spinners in India?

It needs lot of time to get a good spinner moulded in a team. Too much of expectation and dropping them or changing them doesn't make a great progress. We have had a strong tradition of producing spinners and there is a need to nurture them.

Who have been your Idols?

Bjorn Borg, Gundappa Viswanath, Vivian Richards, Dennis Lillee and Sachin Tendulkar are some sporting legends that I always admired.

What is the winning mantra for any team?

Whatever be the conditions, whatever be the opposition, the keenness to fight is very important.

Unless, you play as a cohesive unit, nothing can happen. Playing against a good side as a good side and backing each other should be the motto of any winning team.

What is your message to the people of India?

Love all. And hate none. Love can generate a lot of energy in life.

What has been your view about the appointment of 'Coaches' for Indian Cricket Team and when did you decide to quit Cricket?


We should always prefer an Indian coach. There is nothing against foreign coaches. We Indians are very emotional and our thought process is very different. We have to boost the confidence in each player as they already know their job. After playing cricket for years, sometimes you do not enjoy the game. Sometimes you are not performing to the level of your expectation. And that was the time when I thought of making way for the younger generation.

What is your role with 'Sunrisers' team?


I have been chosen as the mentor and strategic analyst for the Sunrisers, while Tom Moody, the former Australian all-rounder, will be the coach of the team. VVS Laxman, who recently retired from International Cricket, will also be a mentor along with being the brand ambassador for the team. ♦

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Who is Deepika's BF?



Deepika Padukone has done just enough to confuse the fans about her love affairs so much that she could probably write a book about her romantic sagas and could occupy every inch of space in her book.

The one-time lovebirds and now matured co-stars (Deepika & Ranveer Singh) will be flying to Dubai on May 16th for promotional events for their upcoming romantic comedy, 'Yeh Jawani Hai Deewani', which is being helmed by Karan Johar's Dharma Production. Rumour has it that Deepika's current beau Ranveer Singh might just hop in the jet to give his girl company! The last time Deepika visited Dubai was during the promotional activities of 'Race 2' and who else do you think happened to pop in for the night other than Ranveer Singh himself! The couple was also spotted at a popular nightclub in the Emirates the next evening, getting cozy and sharing a laugh.

Whereas, Padukone has always maintained that she's single, the diva has also been heard saying that Ranveer Singh is her really good friend and he makes her feel the most important person in the world.

Rumours upset Samantha!

Sizzling beauty Samantha is one of the most wanted heroines in South Indian film industry. Samantha is the most happening heroine in Tollywood and her success percentage is much higher than any of her contemporaries. With so many back to back hits, she has become the most wanted heroine in Telugu. However, it is heard that Samantha is upset about few reports which are currently making rounds in media circles.

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The grapevine has been abuzz recently with rumours that Samantha got Rs 1.5 crores as remuneration. On hearing this, the lovely smile beauty is reportedly shocked and has clarified that she never got even Rs 1 crore as her fee.

Samantha is currently acting in a film directed by Trivikram Srinivas opposite Pawan Kalyan. She is also acting with NTR in Harish Shankar "Ramayya Vasthavaiyya".

-DP Desk



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Market surges to recent highs

By V Sundar Raja

The Indian stock market continues to surge ahead, posting strong gains in the last two weeks. It has erased the earlier losses and the Sensex rallied by more than 1,500 points in the last few days, making it the best ever period in the current year, after the bearish trend which has started in January. But, however, most of the advances were seen in the frontline stocks and market has to sustain at higher levels and has to get into new highs for the mid-cap and small-cap stocks to participate in the bullish trend.

The Foreign Institutional Investors have again started buying strongly and the American markets too are seen firm at record high levels. The weather report indicates that the Indian monsoon is expected to be good in this year, while the inflation too is seen declining which is a positive sign for the economy.

The current corporate quarterly financial performance by the major banks like HDFC, Kotak Bank, ICICI Bank have been better than market expectations and have contributed significantly to the ascending trend of the market.

But all eyes are on the Reserve Bank of India, which is expected to meet on 3rd of this month and may decide about the Banks' lending interest rates. Market is having high

hopes that there would be a reduction in the interest rates, and this monetary action is expected to be the next trigger for the short-term trend of the market.

The software stocks which have been depressed in the last few weeks have made a reversal of earlier weakness, while the consumer goods stocks and market heavy

weights like Hindustan Unilever, ITC have witnessed bullish trend. In-case of a positive reaction of the market after the RBI credit policy on 3rd May, then a further rally can be expected in interest sensitive sectors like the Banks, Real Estate and the Automobile sector stocks.

Crude Petroleum seems to have made a

major band of 5,500 and 4,500 in the last one year in the MCX commodity market. The commodity is seen in minor weakness and has the next major support below at 4,500 to 4,500, where a recovery can be expected.

The precious commodity Gold, has made a minor recovery of about 2,000 Rupees, but has the next major support below at 26,000 and 25,000 levels, where the correction could halt in the short-term in the commodity market.

Silver is seen moving very weak and in-case of any further failure to sustain at the current support of 42,000 then the next major support below is at 40,000, for the short-term investors to be alert. American dollar is seen in a minor weakness from 55 against the Rupee, but has the next major support at 53 Rupees.

But technically on the price charts, Sensex is now nearing the major psychological barrier of 20,000 levels, for the short-term Investors to be cautious, where a short-term halt to the current uptrend and a consolidation can be expected. Market needs to witness firmness at this crucial level and breakout of this key barrier, to indicate a further uptrend. ♦

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Note - Investors should be aware of risks in the stock market.



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