श्री LAKSHMISHREE

Gateway to your Financial Goals

Consolidation In The Range

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Invest Today,

For

Better Tomorrow !!

From Managing Director's Desk To Readers

Commonly known in the Equity Markets, "You never know what kind of setup market will present to you, your objective should be to find an opportunity where risk-reward ratio is favorable to you." The above statement applies to every participant in Financial Markets. The future is unpredictable, and so is the Stock Market. Here the best you can do is make your knowledge work for you. Therefore, we are trying to help every individual to gain as much knowledge as possible, so that you can understand the risk-reward ratio.

No doubt we have a long way to walk to reach our goals. At the same time accomplishing all small milestones will surely lead you on a successful path. The Indian economy contracted by 6.9 per cent in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic, which is now forecasted to set a record of growing by 5 per cent in 2021. With the businesses being on hold and the second wave of pandemic making everyone to stay indoors, one of the best thing you can do to earn your living is investing or trading in the Stock Market. With the growth target set by 2021, the businesses would be proportionately growing along too.

The technologies are getting upgraded with the blink of an eye, the strategies are changing overnight, the stocks which was meant to be profitable yesterday may end up with the loss today. It is an era of continuous change. The change in fast-growing technologies and the business has also demanded the re-work on business models. It also means that the investors or traders have to also walk with the time by learning and upgrading the skills of investing and trading respectively.

Basically, skills and knowledge become a major component of your successful and profitable investment journey. So what you should do as an investor? Fortunately, you can work more deeply to figure out the peak parameters that will help you to understand the businesses.

Some Insights For Prudent Market Participants…

Technical Views:

- Check for the revenues/sales that the business is able to generate.
- Look for the cash that the company is able to generate through the business operations.
- Get a sight of Inventory Turnover of the company.

Fundamental Views:

- Whether the business have enough talent to adapt the changes in the industry.
- Look for the consistency in companies Cash Flow.
- Look if the companies are proactive with the changes in business activities.

Moving on to the activities that can help you in your investment journey based on your risk appetite and goals.

We at Lakshmishree Investments & Securities Pvt Ltd have handpicked the businesses that are not just based on the robust fundamentals, but also are potent enough to grow with India's aim of 5 per cent by 2021. We guide you to design your portfolio based on your goals, funds, and risk reward ratio. We focus majorly on the quality part, because of the belief that quality is a way to success. This has made us come up with the webinars by top speakers and well-experienced industry experts.

In this edition of May 2021, you will get to see an analysis of the Nifty stocks in addition to a collection of the articles that will undoubtedly helping you to get a much clearer understanding in terms of your investing, trading in the Stock Market.

Even though the fundamentals remains constant, the rules of investing are also changing on a rapid note. Hence, in this volatile world, we encourage every person to get a sight of the Stock Market in the initial stages of their investment journey. "We are all set to inform & educate, are you ready to intake the learning's?"

Salil Shah

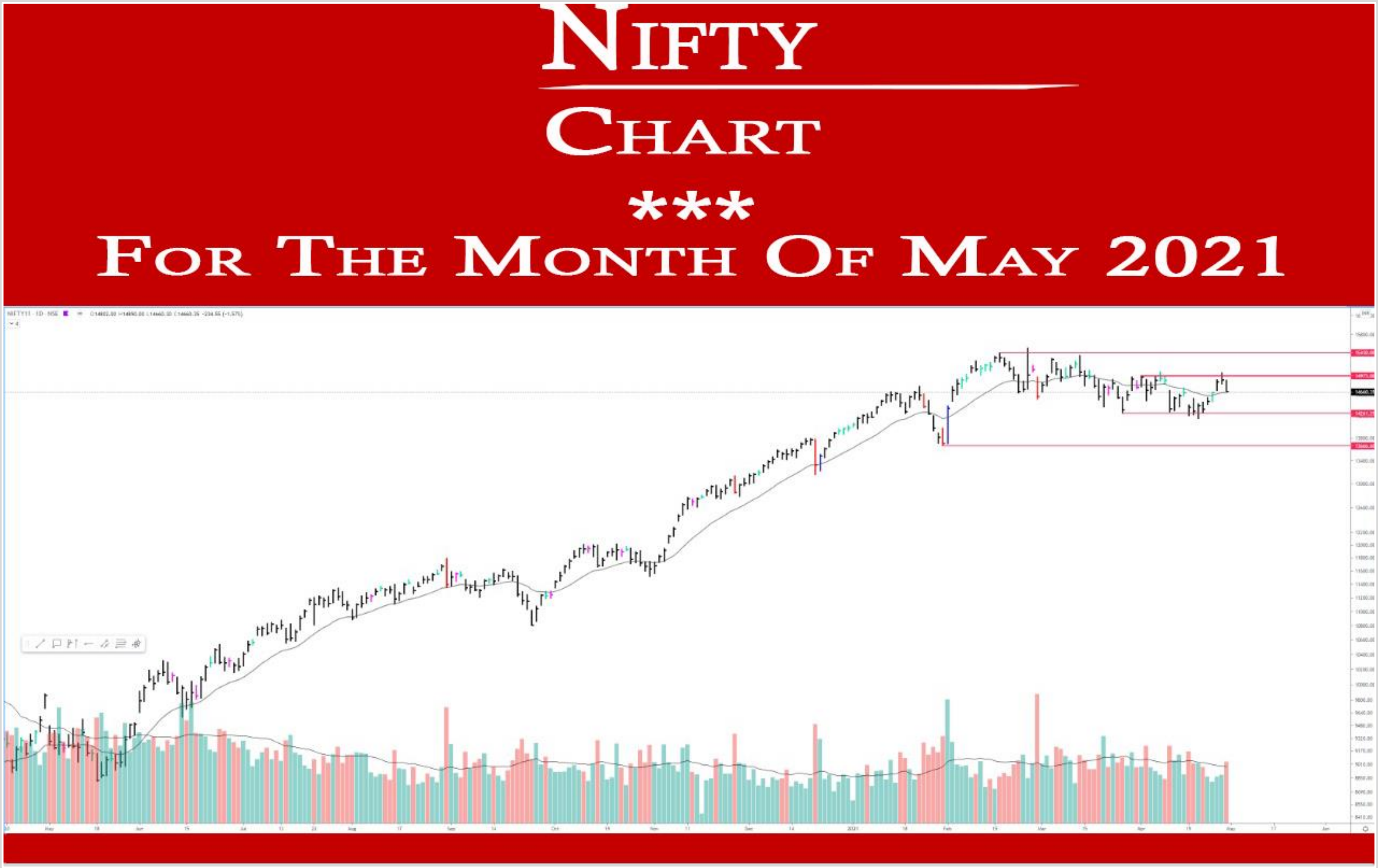
Managing Director
Lakshmishree Investments & Securities Pvt Ltd

Look What Our Research Analyst Has To Say…

The Index is trading in a small range of 15068 on the north whereas the extreme on the south is placed at 14261. Where as the broader range is 15430-13666. Any acceptance outside the smaller range will lead to a move to the extreme on the broader range on the side of breakout. The Global market are also losing momentum and steam and are heading into consolidation zone hence the domestic Indices should also continue within the minor range for the month of may. Oil is on a boil and VIX in a large rectangular base are a precursor of a downside correction to follow but need more evidence to play on the short side which should emerge towards the end of May.

Anshul Jain

Research Analyst



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Gateway to your Financial Goals

Stocks To Watch

1. IIFL Finance Ltd.

Industry	LTP	Recommendation	Base Case Fair Value	Bull Case Fair Value	Time Horizon
NBFC	Rs. 266.2	Buy at LTP and add further at Rs. 241	Rs. 290	Rs. 319	2 Quarters

Shree Varahi Scrip Code	IIFL
BSE Code	532636
NSE Code	IIFL
Bloomberg	IIFL:IN
CMP Apr 27, 2021	266.2
Equity Capital (Rs Cr)	75.7
Face Value (Rs)	2
Market Cap (Rs Cr)	10,084
Adj. Book Value (Rs)	133
Avg. 52 Week Volumes	1033529
52 Week High	346.55
52 Week Low	58.15

Share Holding Pattern % (Mar, 2021)	
Promoters	24.96
Institutions	59.47
Non Institutions	15.57
Total	100.0

Our Take…

IIFL Finance Ltd (erstwhile IIFL Holdings Ltd) is one of the leading retail focused diversified NBFCs in India, engaged in the business of loans and mortgages along with its subsidiaries IIFL Home Finance Ltd and Samasta Microfinance Ltd. IIFL Finance, through its subsidiaries, offers a wide array of products. The growth in company's AUM which was at ~10% over the past two years till end of FY20 has picked pace and risen 11.1% in three quarters of FY21 to Rs.42,264 cr in December 2020. The company has been constantly focusing on building a granular retail franchise and thereby de-risking its business model. As of Q3FY21, the home loans segment constituted 32% of the total AUM, while gold loans constituted 29%, business loans 18% and microfinance loans 9%. Retail Lending and Digital Delivery is recognized as the cornerstone of the company's long-term strategy. Retail loans accounted for almost 90% of the AUM as of Q3FY21. It has been aggressively expanding its reach, mainly in Tier 2 and 3 locations, which hold ~85% of its total branches. Over the past five years, the company has more than doubled its branch network from 1,161 branches in FY15 to 2,439 branches in Q3FY21. The strategy of higher focus on retail loans has helped the company fetch higher margins; moreover, the segment is inherently less risky in terms of asset quality. The company is adequately capitalized and has a well-diversified resource profile.

IIFL Finance is led by a highly experienced management team with strong expertise in the financial services domain and is owned by marquee investors. As of Q4FY21, promoters hold 24.96%, the Fairfax group holds 22.4%, CDC Group PLC holds 15.44% and other foreign investors hold 21.50%. But the stock is under Additional Surveillance Measure (ASM) long term stage 1, which necessitates the presence of a high-risk appetite for taking short term positions in the stock.

Valuations…

We have envisaged 19% CAGR for consolidated net interest income and 39% CAGR for net profit over FY20-FY23E. We have estimated that loan book would grow at 13.4% CAGR with maximum growth likely to come from retail lending book. The initial asset quality picture post moratorium seems positive and collection efficiencies have also reached the pre-COVID level. We believe that from FY22 onwards, the NPAs will start to reduce. We expect margin to remain stable around 8.5% while RoAA is expected to reach 3.1% in FY23 vs 2.3% in FY21E.

We believe investors can buy IIFL Finance Ltd buy at LTP and add further at Rs.241 (1.23xFY23E ABV) for the base case fair value of Rs.290 (1.5xFY23E ABV) and bull case fair value of Rs.319 (1.63xFY23E ABV) over the next two quarters.

Financial Summary...

Particulars (RsCr)	Q3FY21	Q3FY20	YoY-%	Q2FY21	QoQ-%	FY19	FY20	FY21E	FY22E	FY23E
NII	573.2	366.1	56.6	545.4	5.1	1924.7	1646.5	2148.3	2482.6	2741.9
PPOP	615	271	127.3	563	9.2	1394.7	1191.5	2326.6	2489.3	2753.9
PAT	268.3	182.5	47.0	212.6	26.2	796.3	553.6	854.7	1206.7	1478.6
EPS (Rs)						21.1	14.6	22.6	31.9	39.1
ABV (Rs)						110.8	118.6	135.6	162.1	196.0
P/E						12.6	18.2	11.8	8.3	6.8
P/ABV (x)						2.4	2.2	2.0	1.6	1.4
RoAA (%)						2.0	1.6	2.3	2.9	3.1

Income Statement...

(Rs Cr)	FY19	FY20	FY21E	FY22E	FY23E
Interest Income	4509.7	4043.3	4660.5	5366.0	5965.9
Interest Expenses	2585.0	2396.8	2512.2	2883.5	3224.0
Net Interest Income	**1924.7**	**1646.5**	**2148.3**	**2482.6**	**2741.9**
Income from assigned assets	245.0	576.0	1000.0	1000.0	1100.0
Non interest income	330.1	201.4	372.8	286.2	278.4
Operating Income	**2499.8**	**2423.9**	**3521.2**	**3768.8**	**4120.3**
Operating Expenses	1105.2	1232.5	1194.6	1279.5	1366.4
PPP	1394.7	1191.5	2326.6	2489.3	2753.9
Prov & Cont	368.7	466.0	1118.5	858.6	755.7
Profit Before Tax	1025.9	725.4	1208.0	1630.7	1998.2
Tax	334.2	171.8	300.3	424.0	519.5
PAT	**691.7**	**553.6**	**907.7**	**1206.7**	**1478.6**

Balance Sheet…

(Rs Cr)	FY19	FY20	FY21E	FY22E	FY23E
Share Capital	75.6	75.7	75.7	75.7	75.7
Non-Controlling Interest	4.4	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6
Reserves & Surplus	4278.7	4684.3	5425.5	6462.0	7732.5
Shareholder funds	**4358.7**	**4765.6**	**5506.8**	**6543.3**	**7813.8**
Borrowings	26625.8	27066.8	31356.3	35700.7	39276.2
Other Liab & Prov.	2254.3	2508.7	2630.2	2825.1	3042.6
SOURCES OF FUNDS	**33238.7**	**34341.1**	**39493.4**	**45069.1**	**50132.6**
Fixed and Other Intengible Asset	111.9	395.0	623.7	653.7	683.7
Investment	475.9	957.9	252.1	303.5	332.8
Cash & Bank Balance	2521.6	3215.9	3530.8	4655.2	5928.9
Advances	27377.5	28532.0	33608.1	37939.1	41606.1
Other Assets	2751.8	1240.3	1478.8	1517.6	1581.0
TOTAL ASSETS	**33238.7**	**34341.1**	**39493.4**	**45069.1**	**50132.6**

2. Aurobindo Pharma Ltd

Industry	LTP	Recommendation	Base Case Fair Value	Bull Case Fair Value	Time Horizon
Pharmaceuticals	Rs. 988	Buy at LTP and add more on dips to Rs 876	Rs. 1104	Rs. 1168	2 Quarters

Shree Varahi Scrip Code	AUROPHARMA
BSE Code	524804
NSE Code	AUROPHARMA
Bloomberg	ARBP: IN
CMP Apr 23, 2021	988
Equity Capital (Rs Cr)	58.6
Face Value (Rs)	1
Market Cap (Rs Cr)	58274
Book Value (Rs)	374
Avg. 52 Week Volumes	5263852
52 Week High	1023
52 Week Low	511

Share Holding Pattern % (Mar, 2021)	
Promoters	51.9
Institutions	37.6
Non Institutions	10.5
Total	100.0

Our Take…

Aurobindo Pharma is on track with its endeavor to increase the number of complex/differentiated products. It is developing various products like complex injectables, inhalers, transdermal patches, and biosimilars, which would aid growth in the US business, and create margin expansion opportunities. Being a backward-integrated manufacturer, the company is well-placed to sustain superior profitability.

For 9MFY21, revenue grew ~11% yoy to Rs 18,773cr, mainly led by strong growth from US formulations and ARV business. EBITDA margin improved 80bps yoy to 21.6%, led by better gross margin. The company reported 129% yoy surge in net profit due to an exceptional gain of Rs 2,814cr in the quarter. Aurobindo Pharma has a strong pipeline with 146 ANDAs pending for approval, 54 of which are injectables. 87 injectables are already approved; the company plans to file 12-15 injectable ANDAs in the US each year. Furthermore, it has ~300 products under various stages of development. The launch momentum remained healthy in 9MFY21 with 34 products (including 11 injectables). The company has been constantly focusing on deleveraging its balance sheet and, post the sellout of Natrol for US$ 550mn or Rs 4,000cr, the company has become net cash positive in Q3FY21 with net D/E at -0.04x and net cash of US$ 117mn.

In addition to the PLI scheme investments of Rs 3,000cr, Aurobindo plans to augment its capacities in APIs (to invest Rs 800cr over 2-2.5 years) and expects to double its revenues in the next 4-5 years. The progress on complex/vaccine pipeline remains on track and we remain positive on the company's capabilities to monetize this pipeline over the next few years. The growth outlook for EU, ARVs and RoW markets remains strong with 8-10% revenue CAGR estimated over FY21-23E. The balance sheet is strengthened as it turned net debt free in Dec-20.

Indian Pharma is expected to perform well, led by a robust exports opportunity, supply chain de-risking by global pharma from China, PLI schemes, enhanced specialty drug efforts, and recovery of global pharma demand post COVID. Also, the COVID-led opportunities could be a catalyst in the near term.

Valuations…

Strong growth outlook for the US business is driven by improving traction from the generic Injectables space (with comparatively low competition), a healthy product pipeline, and expected traction in recently launched products. European business is also on the path to recovery with demand normalizing. In the long term, Aurobindo is looking to build a presence in the specialty segment, including biosimilars, oncology inhalers, and transdermal patches, which are likely to drive growth. It has a strong advantage of being a low-cost producer with one of the largest product portfolios. Over the years, its dependence on API has consistently reduced with ~90% of its revenue currently coming from formulations. We estimate 6% revenue CAGR, led by both US and EU business, while API and ARV segments would register steady growth over FY20-23E. Operating margin may expand 110bps yoy to 22.2% in the same period. We expect 10% CAGR in net profit, led by steady margin and lower finance costs. We remain positive on Aurobindo on the back of (a) strong complex injectables (manufacturing capabilities/capacity), (b) healthy business of API over three years, (c) improving profitability of the European business, (d) catering the vaccine opportunity over the medium term, and (e) reduced financial leverage.

Possible (though no official announcement so far) demerger of Injectables business could hasten the value unlocking process. We believe that investors can buy the stock at LTP and add more on dips to Rs 876 for base case fair value of Rs 1,104 (17x FY23E EPS) and bull case fair value of Rs 1,168 (18x FY23E EPS) over the next two quarters.

Financial Summary...

Particulars (RsCr)	Q3FY21	Q3FY20	YoY-%	Q2FY21	QoQ-%	FY19	FY20	FY21E	FY22E	FY23E
Total Revenues	6365	5895	8.0	6483	-1.8	19,564	23,099	25,111	25,998	27,863
EBITDA	1369	1208	13.3	1433	-4.5	3952	4864	5460	5632	6175
Depreciation	277	250	10.6	257	7.5	668	967	1069	1145	1261
Other Income	73	31	134.8	47	54.2	116	192	271	261	272
Interest Cost	20	37	-47.3	16	24.2	263	305	75	76	49
Tax	1059	233	354.5	387	173.6	727	914	2036	1168	1284
RPAT	2947	706	318	806	266	2290	2831	5332	3456	3805
APAT	837	715	17	802	4.4	2376	2849	3342	3456	3805
EPS (Rs)						40.5	48.3	57.0	59.0	64.9
RoE (%)						18.6	18.6	17.3	14.5	14.0
P/E (x)						24.5	20.5	17.4	16.8	15.3
EV/EBITDA (x)						14.6	11.4	9.6	8.8	7.5

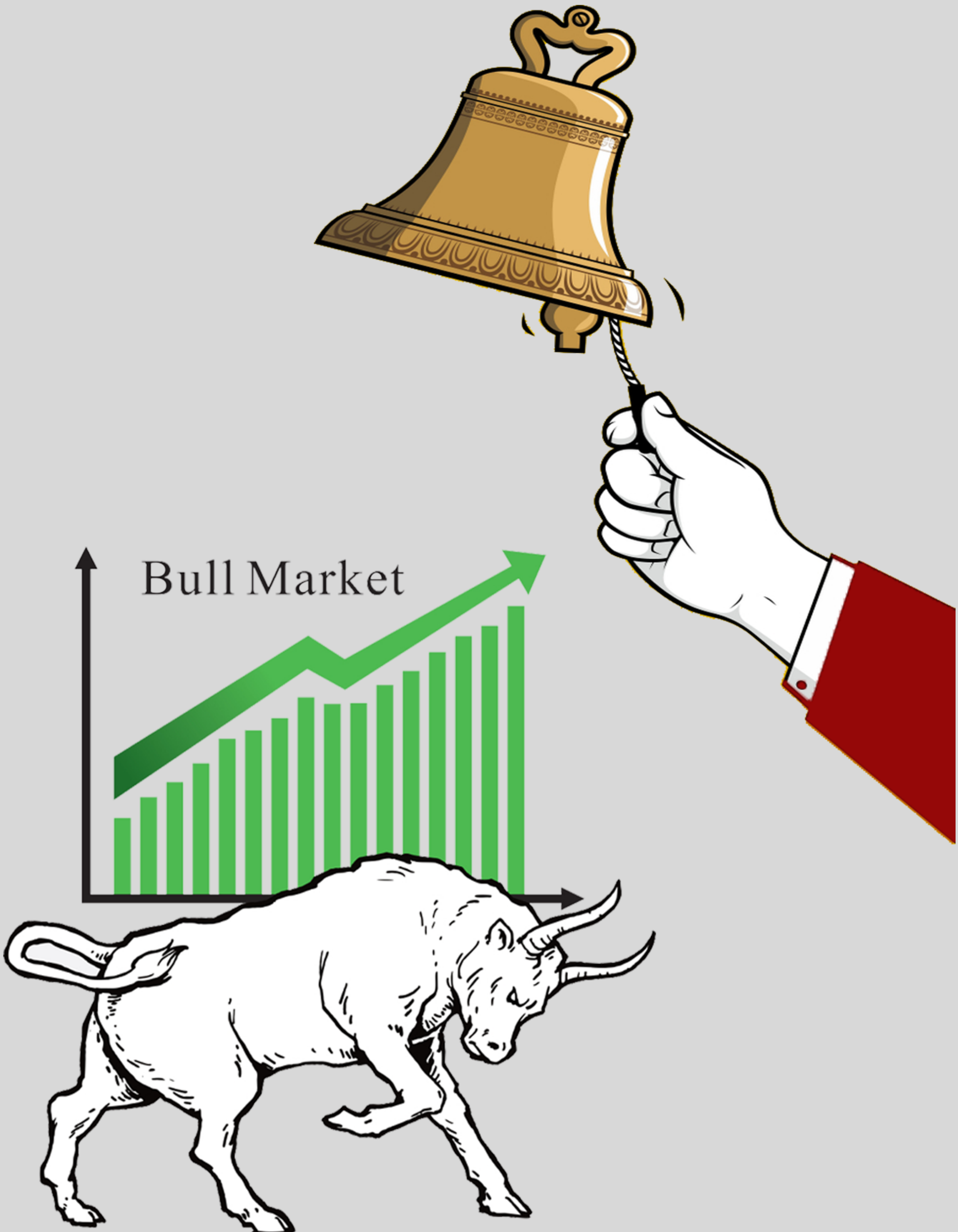
Income Statement...

(Rs Cr)	FY19	FY20	FY21E	FY22E	FY23E
Total Revenues	**19564**	**23099**	**25111**	**25998**	**27863**
Growth (%)	18.6	18.1	8.7	3.5	7.2
Operating Expenses	15612	18235	19651	20366	21688
EBITDA	**3952**	**4864**	**5460**	**5632**	**6175**
Growth (%)	4.3	23.1	12.3	3.2	9.6
EBITDA Margin (%)	**20.2**	**21.1**	**21.7**	**21.7**	**22.2**
Depreciation	668	967	1069	1145	1261
EBIT	3284	3897	4392	4487	4914
Other Income	116	192	271	261	272
Exceptional Items	-123	-26	2843	0	0
Interest expenses	263	305	75	76	49
PBT	3014	3758	7431	4672	5137
Tax	727	914	2036	1168	1284
RPAT	**2290**	**2831**	**5332**	**3456**	**3805**
Growth (%)	-5.5	23.6	88.4	-35.2	10.1
APAT	**2376**	**2849**	**3342**	**3456**	**3805**
EPS	**40.5**	**48.3**	**57**	**59**	**64.9**

Balance Sheet…

Year To March	FY19	FY20	FY21E	FY22E	FY23E
Share Capital	58.6	58.6	58.6	58.6	58.6
Reserves & Surplus	13832	16752	21873	25118	28713
Shareholders' Equity	**13891**	**16811**	**21932**	**25177**	**28772**
Long Term Loans	180	0	0	0	0
Short Term Loans	6786	5562	4437	3125	1812
Total Loans	6966	5562	4437	3125	1812
Deferred tax liabilities (net)	281	303	303	303	303
Total Equity & Liabilities	**21140**	**22675**	**26671**	**28603**	**30885**
Application of Funds					
Net Block	8475	9397	9828	10163	10382
CWIP	1669	1986	1986	1986	1986
Current Assets	**15539**	**16626**	**21027**	**23425**	**26124**
Inventories	7246	7700	9288	9616	10536
Debtors	3414	4315	4816	4843	5344
Cash & Bank Balance	1957	2842	5133	7153	8405
Loans & Advances	2922	1769	1790	1814	1839
Current Liabilities	**5315**	**6251**	**7088**	**7889**	**8526**
Creditors	2677	2897	3440	3917	4199
Provisions	2637	3355	3648	3971	4327
Net Current Assets	10224	10375	13938	15536	17598
Total Assets	**21140**	**22675**	**26671**	**28603**	**30885**

This Might Impact Your Investments !!



In Charts| Zomato IPO: Key financials, risks listed in DRHP

Food delivery platform Zomato filed a Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP) with the market regulator SEBI on April 28, 2021. According to the DRHP filed by Zomato, the company will offer equity shares aggregating up to Rs 8,250 crore. Of this, Rs 7,500 crore will be a fresh issue, while Rs 750 crore will be an offer for sale for its existing investor Info Edge. Here are the some of key financials and risk factors listed by the food delivery platform in its DRHP.

Zomato 2804_004

The food-delivery startup has a history of net losses from fiscal year FY18 to FY20 and even in the nine months ended December 31, 2020, it had a loss of Rs 682 crore.

Risk Factor: The company said it has a history of net losses and anticipates increased expenses in the future.

Zomato 2804_001

The food-delivery platform saw a good revenue growth in FY19 and FY20. However, its nine-month data is a bit lower. In fact, the company said that its revenue may decrease and it may not be able to sustain historical growth rates and historical performance may not be indicative of future growth or financial results.

Risk Factor: Zomato has said its revenue may decrease and the business may be adversely affected if it fails to retain existing restaurant partners, customers, or delivery partners or fails to add new restaurant partners, delivery partners, or customers to its portfolio in a cost-effective manner.

Zomato 2804_005

Net cash used in operating activities for the nine months ended December 31, 2020 was Rs 269 crore, cash flow in investing activities was Rs 4,222 crore, which included payment to acquire liquid mutual fund units, while cash flow from financing activities was Rs 4,574 crore.

Risk Factor: The COVID-19 pandemic, or a similar public health threat, has had and could impact the business, cash flows, financial condition and results of operations. The company said its business, cash flows and prospects may be materially and adversely affected if it is unable to continue to provide services to its restaurant partners or to implement its strategy of enabling more restaurants with more solutions.

"The unfavourable media coverage could harm its business, financial condition, cash flows and results of operations," it said. It also noted that it faces "intense competition" in food delivery and other businesses and its business, financial condition, cash flows and results of operations could be adversely affected if the company is unable to compete effectively".

Zomato 2804_003

As of December 2020, the company had a total assets value of Rs 6,988 crore as against Rs Rs 2900 crore in FY20.

How cobots & automation help companies survive Covid-19

The COVID-19 pandemic affected almost everybody across the planet. The consequent global lockdown hit businesses severely and led many to look for new, innovative ways to maintain business continuity. This, in turn, led to the transformation of business models and forced industry leaders to reevaluate how they do business. Keeping business continuity as a priority, collaborative robots, or cobots for short, and automation have become buzzwords and have panned out as the undisputed champions in support of the changing business processes in manufacturing, supply chain, food supplies, remote work and e-commerce.

Shortage of Labour Due to COVID-19 Restrictions

There is no question that many companies faced manpower shortages since the pandemic due to control measures. The biggest fight for any enterprise was to maintain operations and revenue while managing expenditure and facing labour uncertainty during this difficult period. Krishi Group is such a company.

Irrigation equipment is critical for Indian agriculture and demand is high, and Krishi Group is one of India's leading agricultural equipment manufacturers. During COVID-19, the firm was hard hit by staff absences, with a 40% to 50% reduction in workforce. The facilities struggled to keep up with demand until a cobot was introduced. The robotic arm now works with a human worker on quality control tasks that previously require two workers to complete.

Lowers the risk of transmission of COVID 19

Around us, we are seeing a rapid introduction of robots into our daily lives to cope with social distancing measures. Some fast food chains and hospitals are using robots to take temperature and distribute sanitisers. Certain food services, groceries, and restaurants have shifted to robots for food preparation and take away deliveries. Even in the warehouses of e-commerce giants, robots are being tested to improve efficacy in sorting, shipping, and packing. Companies are increasingly looking into introducing automation at the workplace to comply with pandemic measure, reduce the risk of infection and safeguard the health of staff.

In Dallas, Texas, when All Axis Machining, a 20-person contract machine shop and fabricator was hit by reduced production capacity due to social distancing requirements, they knew they had to make some rapid decisions. Without making changes to the production process, they were faced with the prospect of turning down future orders. The company turned to automate some of their processes by cobots for essential machine tending tasks. Collaborative robots, as the name implies, can be placed next to human workers to collaborate and assist with repetitive tasks. This has enabled them to increase production, despite the social distancing measures and labour uncertainty caused by the pandemic.

Rise in the Use of Cobots

According to a study by IFR (International Federation of Robots), there is a 15% increase in sales of robots in the year 2015 and it further estimates that by the year 2021 the 2.5 million industrial robots will be at work with an annual growth of 15% per year. In 2020 and beyond, cobots can be seen fulfilling a unique role of enabling a safer work environment as factories continue to operate. The benefits and contribution to the survival of companies observed during the pandemic will likely further accelerate the adoption of cobots and automation at workplaces. The COVID-19 outbreak has caused a major shakeup, no doubt about it. This is a time when the robustness of our supply chain is seriously challenged. Thousands of successful, innovative manufacturers are addressing the challenges of an uncertain world. Here are some of the proven approaches they're taking, and that you can replicate.

AUTOMATION IS THE SINGLE MOST POWERFUL STRATEGY: For manufacturers, automation has emerged as the single most powerful strategy for succeeding in a VUCA world, whether that's caused by a pandemic or almost any other business challenge.

SUPPLY CHAINS NEED A PLAN B: The global pandemic hit supply chains quickly and acutely, illustrating the vulnerability that had been building for years. Manufacturers now know that they need a Plan B in case remote production or supply is compromised and market demands shift. At the same time, many manufacturers have realized the advantage of being closer to their customers, even if that keeps them in regions with higher labor costs.

LABOR SHORTAGES LEAD TO OPPORTUNITY: Previous off-shoring trends were fueled by lower-cost labor. Advances in collaborative automation, however, have drastically increased productivity and reduced costs across a number of manufacturing processes. Many of these can now be easily reshored and deployed domestically. While labor rates in traditionally low-cost countries have seen annual increases in the double digits, affordable collaborative robots make automation even more accessible, independent of company size.

ADAPT TO MEET CHANGING DEMANDS: Collaborative automation is designed to be easily learned and quickly deployed so that it can be moved, changed, and redeployed by in-house employees with minimal hand-holding.

MEET NEW SAFETY REQUIREMENTS: The importance of physical distancing during COVID-19 has made infection control a new priority, and for many manufacturers this new reality will continue indefinitely. Many successful manufacturers were able to reopen their doors more quickly with collaborative robots. By inserting UR cobots within standard production lines, these companies were able to offset face-to-face risks and create safe distance between workers while keeping output levels high.

LEARN MORE ABOUT NAVIGATING THE COVID LANDSCAPE: In many ways, we're navigating uncharted territory, but a year into the COVID-19 pandemic, we're finally seeing a promising future. Thanks to collaborative automation, manufacturers are discovering innovative new opportunities to address a VUCA world and emerge smarter, sharper, and better prepared for any situation. Get more information on how manufacturers like you around the world are using collaborative automation to adapt and succeed.

President Biden, suspend intellectual property rights on Covid vaccines

A mixed group of more than a 100 prominent people, including former UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown, have reportedly written to the US President Joe Biden, asking for a suspension of intellectual property rights on Covid vaccines to help poorer countries cope with the pandemic.

President Biden should heed the suggestion. There is nothing radical about it. It merely asks the US government to allow existing provision of WTO-compliant intellectual property rules to be used without inviting US displeasure.

The existing WTO rules allow countries to suspend IP rules and provide for compulsory licensing of drugs to cope with health emergencies. We are living through a global health emergency. In the past, countries have been reluctant to invoke their lawful prerogative of compulsory licensing mainly because they were worried about how the US would react. It's hypocritical to bring about a law that allows for special measures to cope with health emergencies, but find indirect ways of preventing it from being used.

As the world's largest economy and the most influential country, it is time for the US to display moral leadership in a crisis.

The fundraising challenges plaguing Indian nonprofits

A new study finds that the key fundraising challenges Indian nonprofits face are building strategy and attracting new donors.

Over the past several years, a series of reports have captured the state and potential of the individual giving market in India. These include Bain India's Philanthropy Reports and the 2019 Sattva report on everyday giving in India, among others. Much has been written about how the market is growing, where the opportunities lie, and what needs to change. We wanted to add to this body of knowledge with a survey of nonprofits that lays out their fundraising approaches, challenges, and understanding of the market. So, in 2018, we conducted a research project in collaboration with Samhita and the Collective Good Foundation to understand what nonprofits are doing when it comes to fundraising, and what is working in the individual donor fundraising space in India. Nonprofits can use the 'Indian Giving Benchmarking Report' (part one of a two-part research project), as a practical tool to compare their fundraising against peers.

Methodology

We created a 40-question survey which we shared via e-mail with the 2,800 organisations in Samhita GoodCSR's network in 2018. Of this list, 682 nonprofits filled out the survey, representing a 24 percent response rate. The scale of these organisations ranged from small (no paid staff and an annual budget of under INR 10 lakhs) to those with a staff of 5,000 and an annual budget that was more than INR 10 crore). Small nonprofits comprised 32 percent of the respondent pool, while the largest nonprofits comprised 6 percent. Forty-seven percent were medium-sized organisations (annual budgets between INR 10 lakh and INR 99.99 lakh) and 15 percent were 'very large' (annual budgets between INR 1 crore to INR 9.99 crore).

According to our survey, in FY18 the respondents reported the following:

They raised an average of INR 49 lakh (approximately USD 68,000) from 191 individual givers.

The median amount raised from individuals was INR 3.5 lakh (USD 4,860) from 30 donors.

They also reported having a diverse mix of revenue sources—with individual donors representing the largest share of total income at 35 percent.

Thirty-five percent had their annual revenue come from individuals (friends, family, and general public), followed by government (18 percent), and CSR departments (13 percent).

For small organisations, individual givers—philanthropists, friends, family, everyday givers—account for 60 percent of annual revenue; for large nonprofits, the figure is 16 percent, while for very large organisations, it's 10 percent.

When it comes to CSR, very large nonprofits received 35 percent of their income from companies, compared to seven percent for small organisations. As one survey respondent commented, "CSR doing companies are more focused today on funding big NGOs (may be authentic or not) rather than funding NGOs who need funds seriously to carry their objectives to a big level."

Key insights from the survey

Fundraising strategies and approaches

Seventy-two percent of respondents said that they find new donors through their founder's network, and that the most common methods for acquiring new donors include leveraging social media and board members. However, of the nonprofits surveyed, only 38 percent stated that their board members give money or are involved with fundraising. We found no difference by size of organisation (ie, there is the same level of involvement in fundraising for small, medium, large, or 'very large' nonprofits.)

"Asking for money face-to-face also emerged as the most effective method for soliciting donations."

Asking for money face-to-face also emerged as the most effective method to solicit donations, with 68 percent of those who have adopted this method saying that it is an effective way to raise money. As one respondent shared, "Personal visits of the individuals makes the difference and they donate."

Donor engagement

Annual reports and "beneficiary updates, letters, and interactions" top the list of activities to build relationships with donors (with 64 percent and 62 percent of respondents deploying these methods, respectively). Nonprofits said that they employ many other useful strategies as well, which help deepen their relationship with donors over time. These include texting donors (31 percent), impact reports (33 percent), social media (39 percent), and face-to-face meetings (32 percent).

Additionally, 54 percent of nonprofits had a volunteer programme to engage their potential and current donors. Volunteers help with organising events, providing advice, serving on governing boards or committees, and working directly with the beneficiaries.

Challenges when fundraising from individuals

The survey highlighted how almost half of all respondents (46 percent) don't know how to attract new donors, and a third don't have a clear fundraising strategy. This could be because of a lack of staff resources, which was pointed out as a common challenge (26 percent). And for smaller nonprofits in particular, no or limited access to wealthy people is a problem for fundraising large amounts.

What nonprofits need

When it comes to 'retail' fundraising (ie, fundraising from everyday givers as opposed to the ultra-wealthy), nonprofits require assistance with running effective crowdfunding campaigns, email appeals, sending direct mails, and so on. In the survey, they also expressed wanting training on how to make presentations to CSR teams, how to organise events and benefits, and how to get better at making face-to-face asks of funders. According to one survey respondent, "One of the key challenges [they] face is identifying and connecting with Indian philanthropists/HNIs."

"There is much work to be done by frontline fundraisers in terms of identifying donors as well as building, and nurturing relationships with them."

So, in this challenging time of lockdown and virtual schooling and work (for those of us who are lucky enough to work from home), it is more important than ever to keep our donors updated about what we are doing to advance our cause during the pandemic. Virtual visits between nonprofit CEOs and donors can keep the conversation going so that when the time comes to ask for a renewal gift, the request for support won't seem unexpected.

There is much work to be done by frontline fundraisers in terms of identifying donors as well as building, and nurturing relationships with them. The results of our survey underscore the value of personal communication with donors (direct emails, telephone calls), the effectiveness of face-to-face encounters (via Zoom or WhatsApp), and finding meaningful ways to engage our donors in the mission of our organisation.

Bad Banks: Not by sovereign guarantee

A sovereign guarantee for the security receipts issued by the bad bank being set up to buy out the bad loans weighing down the books and ability of public sector banks (PSBs) is not germane to successful working of the proposal. Rather, three other factors would make or break a bad bank. One is expertise in the bad bank to resolve bad loans or run debtor companies that are in a position to operate. Another is the wherewithal to perform the role of patient capital. The third factor is independent valuation of the assets being transferred.

The bulk of the capital for the bad bank should come from the banks themselves, so that the gains from resolution would also come back to the banks, apart from the sale price of the bad assets. However, the government could also contribute some seed capital. Rightly, RBI, which supports the proposed bad bank, also underscores the need for a well-capitalised entity to strengthen asset resolution. The sale of non-performing assets (NPAs) will make space for PSBs to lend without being burdened by these bad loans, and when the assets underlying these loans are resolved, the bank will reap profits. However, the need is to ensure that the valuation of assets is done by third parties (read: audit firms) in order to shield bank managers from any arbitrary criminalisation of NPA sales. Bankers fear haircuts on sale of bad assets: these might be construed as mala fide moves. Reassurance is possible if third parties determine the value of the assets to be transferred, attested subsequently by a reviewer, another audit firm.

Such arm's-length pricing and an oversight committee will reassure bankers, and help protect them from charges of causing loss to the exchequer. This is what will make a bad bank succeed.

Abandoned oil wells should be an agenda item in climate talks

Now the climate change talks are in the news. This has become a routine game for the countries. Developed economies want the developing economies to cut CO_2 emissions, control methane emissions (reduce agricultural activity) and promote renewable energy technology (only solar is permitted since it is money spinner). Why all the countries are harping on coal-based power plants while a silent killer is causing more damage compared to CO_2. Though methane is in the atmosphere for a shorter period its global warming potential is 34 times greater. As a result, methane emissions contributed to about one-third of today's anthropogenic GHG warming. 24 % of methane contribution to the atmosphere comes from oil and gas wells while agriculture contributes only 3%. Let us examine how countries are wasting their energy available from abandoned oil and gas wells as well as underground coal fires.

There are greater than 27000 abandoned oil wells (also known as orphaned wells)in Gulf of Mexico alone. Similarly Texas has greater than 21000 abandoned wells. Thus in US alone there are greater than 3.2 million orphaned wells. This includes 106,687 wells in California and 2200 in New York (drilled in 1800). The cost of plugging these methane emitting wells varies from US$ $ 9.1 billion. (California wells) and 435 billion US$ (New York wells). These wells, according the US Environmental Protection Agency, are releasing much greater than 281 kilotones of methane into the atmosphere equal to consuming about 16 million barrels of crude oil. Similarly there are about 313,000 abandoned wells in California, releasing 10 kilotons of methane into the atmosphere. A few of them are capped to prevent pollution (especially from methane emissions). Imagine the number across all the oil fields of the world !!

A large number of these wells are as old as 81 years (drilled in 1940). These are on-shore wells. Abandoned Wells in the deep sea are equally large and are not capped and hence there is no control over methane emissions. All these wells were drilled to a depth of about 2.5 km. A recent systematic investigation indicates that in total in the US there are 4 million abandoned wells and in Canada the number is 370 000 (James P. Williams, Amara Regehr, Mary Kang. Methane Emissions from Abandoned Oil and Gas Wells in Canada and the United States. Environmental Science & Technology, 2020; 55 (1): 563 DOI: 10.1021/acs.est.0c04265). The methane emissions from these wells are about 48 g/h/well. While there are the actual scrutinized numbers, the US and Canada underestimated it by 150 % (Canada) and 20% (US). This being the case behind their backyard, the US blamed India for emitting methane from agricultural and livestock activity. What a paradox. Thus, there are millions of abandoned wells in the world but there is no data on orphaned oil wells from other countries. A recent publication reported the existence of 30 million abandoned well in the world (Gharibi, Shabnam; Mortezazadeh Emad; Hashemi Aghcheh Badi, Seyed Jalaledin; Vatani, Ali, Feasibility study of geothermal heat extraction from abandoned oil wells using a Utube heat exchanger, Energy (2018), DOI:10.1016/j.energy.2018.04.003). The question here is not the amount that has to be spent in plugging the wells and protect the environment but the damage these wells are causing to the global environment. Why are these climate change pundits harping on coal fired power plants in all the discussions that are ceremoniously minuted by the second tire economies?" and forgetting about these high methane emitting wells? Only CO2 emissions are brought to focus always. Read the recent statement by IEA's (International Energy Agency) on CO2 emissions……..”Global energy-related CO2 emissions are heading for their second-largest annual increase ever. Demand for all fossil fuels is set to grow significantly in 2021. Coal demand alone is projected to increase by 60% more than all renewables combined, underpinning a rise in emissions of almost 5%, or 1 500 Mt. This expected increase would reverse 80% of the drop in 2020, with emissions ending up just 1.2% (or 400 Mt) below 2019 emissions levels". On a similar tone IEA should also publish methane emissions from these wells. But they don't data….countries mask the data. While one can see CO2 emissions from coal fired power plants, methane emissions are invisible!!!!

But these abandoned oil wells are a "blessing in disguise". They have a huge potential to generate electricity and contribute to methane emissions reduction. The bottom-hole temperatures in these wells vary from 120 to 250 ?C. They can be utilized to generate electricity using a down the hole heat exchanger or simply circulating water if the temperatures are high. ORC technology can be brought off the shelf and can be fitted to these wells for generating electricity. Using these wells is economical because drilling new geothermal wells is expensive. A minimum of 4 MWe can be generated from each well with a cumulative economic value of 1.2 billion US$ from wells located in the US only. Not all wells' bottom-hole temperatures are high. Many wells have lower temperatures of the order of 100 C. Such wells can be utilized to extract heat energy for space heating and cooling. For example a well with a depth of 3000 m and with the bottom-hole temperature of 125 ?C can be utilized to heat an area of 10000 m2 to 26 ?C with a water flow rate of 20 m3 /h. The cost of the system is half of the conventional heating system per year. Such wells can be utilized for district heating. The amount of CO2 saving is of the order of 457 tons /year.

This technology is also applicable to coal mines where underground coal mines are under fire. India's current coal production is greater than 286 million tonnes. Raniganj coalfield is the largest coal mine in India. Like any other coal mines in the world, coal fire in Raniganj is very common. This is true with other coal mines in the country as well. For example, several coal seams in Jharkhand and Bihar are burning underground. Coal mine fires are due to primary combustion when oxygen and water are introduced through cracks and unsealed shafts. These coal fires continue through several years Most underground coal fires exhibit smoldering combustion and may only involve relatively small amounts of coal capable of burning in the presence of a small amount (2%) of oxygen. To give an example of the magnitude of this hazard, in the USA nearly 600 coal mine fires are burning for 80 years. Other underground coal mines that are burning are located in Russia and several east European countries. These fires are located at shallow depth and the depth in many cases does not go beyond 400-500 m. Till now this heat energy available is not put to use. Heat exchanger technology commonly used in geothermal power generation can easily be adopted in regions where underground coal mine fire is common and perennial.

How creative manufacturing helps women to build sustainable livelihoods

Women often get the short end of the stick in India, and those from underprivileged and impoverished backgrounds are the worst hit with unforeseen consequences. In 2020, the poverty rate for women aged 25-34 was 12% which accounted for roughly 13.4 million women. This year the number could rise to 14%, taking the total tally of impacted women in this age group to around 15.2 million!

To address the grim scenario, it is essential to remedy the root causes of poverty and inter-linked repercussions by putting women in the driver's seat, which is exactly happening in the creative manufacturing sector. Women are taking ownership within the organised creative manufacturing ecosystem transforming from artisans to empowered becoming micro-entrepreneurs in the process.

The industry catalyzes this process by helping communities assess traditional skills, aspire and guide them to build organised production units, and sell products with good demand in the modern market. There are four broad ways creative manufacturing helps women create and strengthen sustainable lives and livelihoods.

Increased and Regular Incomes

The creative manufacturing industry handholds women and facilitates market access towards socio-economic opportunities and sustained profitability for themselves. This enables women from underprivileged communities to harness their skills and develop products that appeal to modern markets. This way, they can work in a framework proportional to consistent demand. While there are other menial jobs that women used to do earlier, this sort of sustainable business has tripled their income by leveraging their artisanal skills.

Safe and Equitable Working Conditions

Traditional vocations that employed women did not offer a safer environment, and families understandably hesitated when women worked in unsafe spaces. Now, the scenario stands changed. The creative manufacturing industry, fortunately, has requirements that any organisation must meet. This means women work in places that ensure compliance with the highest global safety standards. We cannot stress the importance of this enough since safety remains one of the key concerns for the women's labor force globally. In addition, this sector has ensured equitable working conditions where they are not grossly underpaid compared to their male counterparts.

Strengthens Women's Access to Quality Education

Two of the key, most interesting aspects of inducting women into an organised workspace are the need to upskill and value addition. As women work in the creative manufacturing sector, their desire to update and upgrade increases, resulting in a potential rise in salary. Women's access to financial and skill training allows them to hone their skills and add more abilities towards their empowerment and inclusion. It is also important to note that these women can understand the power of knowledge, and their families are more likely to invest in their children's education.

A Step Towards Ownership

As a result of the above-listed benefits, women producers can take full ownership of their production. It empowers them socio-economically, financially and confers a great sense of independence as well. In simple terms, when women producers are given access to an ecosystem that enables them to thrive in an entrepreneurial setting with an empowering mindset, they are bound to nurture a life of respect, pursue their dreams and live their aspirations. The creative manufacturing industry is now one of the few ecosystems that offer them a sustainable livelihood and strength to stand on their own feet within their communities and reflect a model of 'champions of change.'

This is what we at Industree are working to scale under the POWER project funded by USAID. Under this project, our efforts are focused on setting up producer-owned enterprises across value chains like banana bark, bamboo, and nontimber forest produce. The outcomes are impactful, steering around 6,800 beneficiaries and another 55,000 people indirectly. Driven by a fundamental focus on women's economic empowerment, the project acts as a springboard for social empowerment as well. Overall, the creative manufacturing sector has enhanced, enriched, and empowered the dignity of women through many impact indicators such as family education, health, and nutritional status, but not to forget supporting an ecosystem of the country's Atma Nirbhar Bharat vision.

These steps are directly aligned with the UNDP's three critical sustainable development goals in a nutshell. This is helping alleviate women out of poverty, promoting gender equality, and strengthening responsible consumption and production in the manufacturing sector.

Farm Bills: The potential positives and criticisms

The enactment of the 3 farm laws introduced by the central government namely the farmers' agreement on price assurance and farm services act, 2020 (FAPAFS), The Essential Commodities Act, 2020 (ECA) and the farmers' produce trade and commerce act, 2020 (FTPC) – has resulted in huge turmoil in the agricultural and the political economy of India.

The FTPC, by far is the most controversial bill, also called the "APMC Bypass Bill" reduces the oversight of the APMCs to their "Market Yard", outside of the market yard entities are free to transact in agriculture produce freely, without having an obligation to pay a fee to the APMC and no licenses are required by the buyers. The act also aims to facilitate a framework for electronic trading for agricultural produce. These trade areas across the country therefore constitute an alternate marketing space and frees farmers from the corruption of the agents and the mandis.

The second act is ECA and it attempts to remove arbitrariness and unpredictability in notifying stocking limits, by limiting to the transparent rule-based price triggers. Currently, it has been set at 100% increase in retail prices for horticulture produce and 50% increase for non-perishable items, using a base price. This act makes it easier for the large private players to enter Indian Agriculture and boosts its productivity.

The third bill is FAPAFS, which is more commonly referred to as "Contract Farming Bill" aims to provide a framework for written agreements between farmers and sponsors without mandating them. The bill also provides for timely payments by the sponsors to the farmers. Just like the APMC Bypass Bill, this bill frees downstream players in the supply chain from the regulations of the state APMC, enabling them to undertake written contracts freely across the country, outside the purview of any 'State Act'. This Act is stated to help the Agri-tech start-ups in India, as India houses 11% of the world's Agri-tech start-ups.

CRITICISMS

1. The arguments that these bills will remove middle man and therefore will lead to farmers having an increased income, assumes that an unfair exchange is the greatest problem faced by Indian Farmers, but inflation data shows that retails and wholesale prices of important food items, cereals, pulses, vegetables and fruits move in tandem. This means that farmgate prices are not completely disassociated from the prices prevailing in retail markets. This shows that intermediaries do pass on profits/losses in food markets to farmers.

What could be a colossal problem for farmers is the large volatility in prices of crops such as vegetables and pulses. Cereals, where the MSP regime is in place for rice and wheat (over 33% of the total rice and wheat production is procured by the government), face the least price volatility. This is exactly why farmers keep pressing for MSP-based procurement for all crops.

2.The main reason for the agrarian crisis is that agriculture employs for too many people to be remunerated. At least40% of the country's workforce is employed in agriculture when it only contributed 15% to India's GDP. The present set of reforms does not address this basic income employment asymmetry in the agriculture sector.

That Indian agriculture, including the green revolution states, has a lot of inefficiencies and that is a well-known fact. A few of these inefficiencies, such as overexploitation of groundwater, have emerged as a grave threat to sustainability of farming itself. Procurement of rice in states like Punjab under the MSP regime has contributed to the sustainability crisis of agriculture.

3.India spends much less on agricultural research and development than China and other comparable countries. As per the data from the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), spending on agricultural research in China was 0.62% of its value added in agriculture, while this number was just 0.3% for India. This is why the yield of Indian cereals is half of that of China.

To sum up, my view, is that liberalisation of agricultural markets is the much-needed direction leading to diversified agriculture and increased farm incomes and yields. Needlessto say, this is not a magic bullet. The process of diversification and growth requires a lot of support. The process of growth would a lot more inclusive if farmers were organised into marketing associations. It is also clear that agricultural markets (APMCs) need more governance.

When science was sacrificed in the hands of politics

Other than its aesthetic appeal, history is also a teacher. A profound and a practical teacher. But to teach effectively its progeny needs to be receptive. India with all her treasures steeped in centuries of traditions, has remained a poor student of history.

In a country that rightfully boasts of a superior infrastructure of information technology, where mobile apps are born every week, there is no dearth of opportunity to know how the 1918 pandemic had panned out. How the second wave of the flu virus decimated one third of an Indian population. Even worse, and only a year ago, how the United States, riding on a murmur of complacency, under a grossly shortsighted President, had failed to follow the fundamentals and perished in thousands.

India was aware of all these. Yet she kept a firm, ignoring eye to all that was common knowledge and commonsense. The country opened up financial facilities, flung opened the doors of restaurants and movie theatres, and allowed cricket to be played in front of stadiums half filled with men, women, and children baying for more entertainment.

Worse followed in early April, when thousands gathered in the city of Haridwar to dip in the sacred Ganges on the spiritual occasion of an annual Kumbh Mela. The fact that hundreds got the virus soon after the event was a foregone conclusion.

And just when one would smell the nadir, things got lower. Elections made their way in two of the most populated states of the country. Wrapped in an inexplicable nonchalance, political rallies, protests, and killings hit the country like a storm. Eerily reminiscent of the times of Trump, supporters gathered with no care to social distancing or wearing masks.

Science was comprehensively sacrificed in the hands of politics.

When I landed at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport in mid-March, the imminent danger could be smelled. An uncomfortable and an ominous silence spoke the inevitable language. Soon, in a dam bursting drama, thousands got infected with the virus, now triple mutant and still raging.

Predictably, the country is short of the essential drugs. Remdesivir, considered the cornerstone of inpatient treatment is nowhere to be found. The nation as a whole does not have enough oxygen tanks. Hospitals are flooded. People are dying on the streets. Smokes from cremation sites cloud the sky. An almost pathetic display of an undercover fragility.

Things are sketchier when it comes to vaccines. Home-bred Covaxin, rolled out before full completion of its trial has an efficacy that ranges anywhere from 60 to 81%. Although Oxford based Covishield promises higher efficacy and vaccines from Russia and the United States are set to be imported, the real culprit lay elsewhere. Riding on a much flaunted 'vaccine diplomacy', India has exported millions of doses of its vaccine to countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, completely oblivious of her own backyard exploding with a population that is next only to China. Couple this with the country's no restriction policy and one would smell the insanity.

All these, despite meaningful scientists and physicians crying hoarse against such appalling attitudes. The skeletal understanding that this RNA virus mutates ferociously, and that to ease restrictions before substantial vaccination will be suicidal, bore no effect on the power corridors of the government.

On the contrary, caught in between honor, and helplessness, federal and state governments issued statements of hope and valor that would have put Fidel Castro to shame.

To an extent, the situation represents the very culture of the subcontinent. An ambience, where warmth, luxury, comfort walk hand in hand with cold, poverty, and starvation. Where the deepest and the most profound philosophies, lie hand in hand with the most inexpressible and meaningless rituals.

Yet, this country harbors an overarching quality that justifies her profound status. Her ability to turn around, and hurl defiance when pushed to the corner. Her insatiable hunger to grow when her very growth is challenged. This legacy is the country's real hope.

Aggressive return to the basics of medicine, be it hand washing, social distancing, compulsory wearing of masks, along with lockdown, and mass vaccination must hold center stage. Only an unequivocal submission to the demands of science can restore her status. And save thousands of lives.

Cryptocurrency: The future of philanthropy?

For charities, the question of how to demonstrate transparency around donations has long been a problem. A lack of visibility of where the money goes can lead to a lack of trust which in turn leads to a decrease in donations which charities need to help people and to survive. However, some non-profits have found a solution: cryptocurrency. A cryptocurrency is built on blockchain, a distributed ledger technology that certifies records and transactions without the use of a central database.

It cannot be erased or changed. Each block in the chain contains several transactions, and every time a new transaction occurs on the blockchain, a record of that transaction is added to every participant's ledger. This means that transparency is an integral feature. This level of transparency just doesn't exist in the fiat currency system.

For non-profits, this changes everything: it makes tracking donations easier and gives people unprecedented visibility on how their donations are used. Using cryptocurrency brings other benefits too. Sending money using digital currencies involves minimal costs and is much more efficient. Imagine all the money that has been wasted in the past due to expensive exchange fees and the presence of middlemen.

That doesn't have to happen anymore, for using digital currencies is so much cheaper than the alternatives. Besides, it is almost instant, meaning the money gets to the people that need it at the right time. Some of the well-known non-profits like UNICEF, Save The Children, and the Against Malaria Foundation are already accepting cryptocurrency donations.

Oxfam piloted using cryptocurrency in disaster recovery in Vanuatu. Around 200 residents were given tap-and-pay cards which they could use to unlock the aid payments to buy food from designated local stores that were equipped with a smartphone to receive the payments. This was a welcome change from the previous cash-based payments that were delayed and hampered by the need for ID checks and bank visits. Blockchain technology can help beyond funding too.

The Indian NGO, Akshaya Patra Foundation, runs the world's largest mid-day meal program of its kind and started to use blockchain technology to track food delivery to make the process much more efficient.

Earlier this year, we partnered with one of India's leading NGOs, Child Rights and You (CRY), to give warm clothes, books and art supplies to people in rural communities across Chhattisgarh. In a country like India, unlocking the power of cryptocurrency in philanthropy could have a huge impact. Millennials make up over a third of the Indian population; they are also the most likely to own digital currencies.

They also give the most to charity and care the most about transparency and where their money is going. Adopting a donations system based on cryptocurrency could boost the amount of money given to a charity and so help those who are in the most need. There are a number of misconceptions around digital currencies: some people see them as a get-rich-quick investment scheme or a scam. But the truth is that there is nothing about digital currencies that make them more likely to be used illegally than fiat currencies; so cryptocurrency needs to be regulated in similar ways.

If, instead, the Government of India takes the decision to ban cryptocurrency, then it would be the first major democracy in the world to do so. An outright ban closes the door on the potential positive impact that cryptocurrency can bring, not only to individuals and the state but also to philanthropy and charities as well.

Cryptocurrency will have a huge positive impact on the world and build wealth for the people that need it the most. Donation systems based on cryptocurrency mean that donors know where their money is going and who it is helping. This greater transparency will lead to better use of funds and mean that the support reaches the people who need it. This also leads to an increase in public confidence in charities, and so more support. It's a virtuous circle. Cryptocurrency today is a force for good.

India’s performance in handling current wave of Covid-19 as reflected in statistics

How is India performing in handling the current wave of Covid 19 in relation to other countries? The Indian newspaper reports and TV media present a scary, gloomy, dead-end scenario. According to Worldometers.info at the time of writing this blog world witnessed 147,170,834 Covid19 infections killing 3,115,268 (2.12%) with 124,826,932 recovered, recording death of around 400 per million population. Gibraltar has the highest death of 2791 per million people.

Considering the total number infected (death per million population), the US has the highest 3.2 million (1762), followed by India 1.96 million (138), Brazil 1.4 ml (1822), France 0.54 ml (1571), Russia 0.47 ml (741), In percentage terms death rate (as a percentage of the infected population dead) is 2.12 percent in the world, 1.79% in the US, 1.11% in India, 2.72% in Brazil, 1.88% in France, 2.27% in Russia, 2.89% in UK, 3.01% in Italy, 2.24% in Spain, 2.5% in Germany, 2.16% in Argentina, 9.23% in Mexico. Thus, Mexico has one of the highest death rates while India has one of the lowest death rates at 1.11% of the Covid 19 infected population compared with Russia and EU countries where it is double and Mexico 7 times higher than India.

Critically ill

Considering the critically ill population out of the total infected Covid19 patients, USA has 0.03%, India 0.05%, Brazil 0.0581%, France 0.11%, Russia 0.048%, Mexico 0.21%. Considering the critically ill population, US have performed fairly well compared with India, France, Russia, and Mexico. This shows the relatively better health facilities in the US compared with India. However, France, Russia, Brazil even with better health facilities have performed poorer than the US.

Number of tests conducted

Does the number of tests conducted for Covid-19 pandemic reflect the potential of the country in addressing the infection, awareness of people to get tested, the role of the media and the infrastructure facilities available? In that case in the US, the number of tests conducted forms 131% of the population, in India 20% of the population, Brazil 20% of the population, France 113% of the population, Russia 87% of the population. Obviously, as the tests can be repetitive over time, there are no compelling reasons to accept this proportion as a reflection of the potential and infrastructure. In addition, due to the existence of social taboo, in India, even though tests are readily performed, people have been avoiding getting tested, since they are afraid of social isolation as well as sort of an outcast situation in the society due to social boycott. The media is also playing a role in both sensitizing regarding Covid-19 and in over sensitizing people and several times playing a negative role leading to depression and a point of no return for people. Many a time people prefer to shut the TV news and programme on Covid-19 due to the way the newsreaders make emotional outbursts leading to mental entropy and agony.

Active cases

The proportion of active Covid-19 cases is a cause of concern since they have the potential to spread the Covid among relatives and friends. In India the active cases form 15.81% of the total infected, while in the US it is 21%, Brazil 8%, France 19%, Russia 5.6%, and Mexico 11%. India’s performance in containing the active cases is far better than the US, France.

Total recovered

The proportion of people infected who have recovered is an indication of the overall performance of the Covid-19 control since it reflects the efforts of the Government as well as the cooperation of the people and the role of health infrastructure in the goal towards recovery. In the world, 85% of the total infected have recovered, in the US 77% of the infected have recovered, in India 83% of the infected have recovered, Brazil 89%, France 79%, Russia 92%, and Mexico 79%. India’s covid recovery rate is closer to World and is far better than US, France, which have far better health infrastructure facilities than India. This shows that the Government has with the help of the States has performed fairly well in controlling Covid despite all the odds faced.

Negative reporting by media to be avoided

Despite undue sensitization by the electronic media especially in India, the response to Covid-19 tests as well as for vaccination seems to be shallow. Even in the field of medicine, there are several Professors of Community medicine, surgeons, practising doctors, who are still showing hesitation towards vaccination. The Government is doing its best in convincing the public regarding the need for vaccination but the public response is still not encouraging. This is one of the major reasons affecting the performance of India in Covid-19 control. Towards this endeavour the press and the media also need to play a positive role in motivating and educating even the doctors towards vaccination, while avoiding reporting negative with undue emphasis, which creates scare in the minds of people. People even with all the information regarding the dangers of participation in meetings, fairs, car festivals, places of worship etc, are not wearing masks and following the physical distance necessary to control the spread. Unless people cooperate in all respects, it is not possible to control Covid.

Arogya Sethu App

This is an excellent App of the Government of India, which sensitizes the person regarding all aspects of Covid-19 including vaccination and offers finally the certificate. The only suggestion to the Government is sometimes the App does not work properly perhaps due to internet speed and other issues which need to be taken care. In addition, people in villages may not certainly understand how to use/operate and it is crucial to facilitate or have facilitators to help the rural people to utilize the Arogya Sethu App facilities. The Government is even giving vaccination free in Government hospitals, Primary health centers, but the public is yet to respond with the expected zeal. Hopefully, they will do so in future.

Is Sebi's move on MF pay a game changer?

"Why do we work?" is a question that many of us have asked ourselves at different points in our careers. It is the subject of many research papers and also a topic of interest to employers striving to engage and motivate their employees. Sometimes, regulators feel the weird need to step in with their two bits as well.

Consider what Sebi has done. It has thrown the fund management industry into a tizzy by asking asset management companies to pay a fifth of the pay of key employees in the form of units of mutual funds they manage. This is after deduction of income tax and mandatory contributions, so the actual percentage (including variable pay and bonuses) will be lower.

The market regulator's stated purpose is to align the interests of employees and unitholders. It intends to do this by making those directly involved in managing a scheme, such as a fund manager, invest a minimum of 50 percent in that scheme and the rest in other schemes. Other employees will invest based on their share of time given to that scheme. There will be a three-year lock-in for these units and in case the employee needs funds for any emergency, the AMC can lend money against these units.

The equivalent of this move by Sebi can be seen in some of Mumbai's Udupi restaurants, where a board will proudly proclaim, "The owner of this restaurant also eats here" or a variant of this message. The message subtly conveys that what's good for the owner should certainly be good for you, in terms of taste and purity.

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Sebi wants to ensure that employees of a mutual fund don't have any existential doubts on why they work, at least for 20percent of their income. They need to grow this investment kitty, and if they benefit, then investors too will automatically gain. Therefore, fund managers will have a greater incentive and since all key employees are also invested, there's collective responsibility as well.

But incentivizing is what salary is for, with additional components such as performance-linked bonuses as a reward for exceptional performance. Then there are ESOPs that reward you when the company's valuation catapults. Why add one more component to it and why in every scheme?

The hope might be that if the restaurant owner eats there, the food quality will be good. But if you go ahead and say that not just the owner but everyone who works in the restaurant tastes every dish on the menu, does it take the trust further? (Sorry, I know that's stretching the analogy but lunch time is approaching!)

In the revised mutual fund rules, some reading between the lines needs to be done. One of the clauses specifies that any fraud, negligence or misconduct by employees will entail a clawback of these units held in a lock-in. There have been instances where fund managers or other personnel have been found indulging in malpractices such as front-running. There have also been instances where investors have suffered because of losses suffered by debt fund investors. The Franklin Templeton case is one such major and recent episode. The conduct of key management personnel in withdrawing their investments in the affected debt funds also raised eyebrows.

Since an employee will have up to three years of income locked in these schemes, Sebi will have a ready means of imposing a financial penalty on the employee by asking the AMC to sell these units and credit the proceeds to the scheme. The collective investment by key employees means they will all be interested in a scheme's success and if they notice any wrongdoings, they may blow the whistle as well.

Whether this leads to any improvement in returns earned by these mutual funds is a good question, and one that will likely be answered in an academic research paper, maybe a decade from now.

TVS Motor steps on the investment pedal for electric vehicles

TVS Motor Company plans to widen the sales of its only electric two-wheeler, iQube, to more than 20 cities and expand its electric vehicle (EV) portfolio with higher investments this year, a top company official said.

According to company officials, a substantial portion of the capital expenditure (capex) of Rs 600 crore lined up for the year will be routed to EVs and emerging technologies.

The all-electric TVS iQube, which was launched in January 2020, was sold exclusively in Bengaluru before Delhi was added to the list in February 2021.

K N Radhakrishnan, director and CEO, TVS Motor Company, said: "The footprint will be expanded to more than 20 cities. The portfolio will be expanded with newer launches. The company is substantially investing in EVs and other emerging technologies."

He further stated that capacity creation is not a challenge for the company as the supply chain is responding very fast

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The Chennai-based company clocks 250-300 units of iQube sales every month in Bengaluru and claims to have a 'good' pipeline of orders. Priced at Rs 1,20,000 in Bengaluru, the 80 km per charge iQube is TVS's first experiment in the EV space.

"This year, the capex will be between Rs 500 and Rs 600 crore. We will closely monitor the Q1 situation and take a call. But all these investments will be in EVs and other emerging technologies and new products. Separate investments in TVS Credit Service will be around Rs 150 crore and other areas will be Rs 150 crore," Radhakrishnan added.

The pandemic impacted demand for electric two-wheelers in FY21. According to data provided by the Society of Manufacturers of Electric Vehicles (SMEV), the industry saw sales of 1,43,837 units during FY21, a fall of 6 percent compared to the 1,52,000 sold in FY20. The FY21 volumes included 40,836 high-speed and 1,03,000 low-speed variants.

The electric two-wheeler segment is generating sizeable interest in the industry. The country's largest two-wheeler maker, Hero MotoCorp, announced a tie-up with Taiwan's Gogoro for the development and sale of electric two-wheelers.

Ola Electric has plans to start selling its indigenously developed electric scooter from July while Bajaj Auto is planning to extend the sales of the Chetak electric scooter to two more cities after starting sales in Pune and Bengaluru last year.

Bringing MSMEs back on the growth trajectory

The revival of the MSME sector, which contributes significantly to the country's GDP and employs close to 100 million people is a priority amid the turbulence unleashed by the pandemic. The ecosystem entrusted with this sector's growth is actioning necessary steps to bring it back on track. Mridu Bhandari from CNBC-TV18 gets into a candid conversation with Manish Jain, Managing Director & Co-Head, Corporate Commercial & Institutional Banking, India, Standard Chartered Bank, Ajay Thakur, Head of BSE SME & Startups and Sankar Chakraborti, CEO, Acuite SMERA Group.

41% of the Rs. 3 lakh crore package disbursed under the Atmanirbhar Scheme

Manish Jain allayed the concerns regarding disbursal of funds where he delved into the processes that banks are adopting to aid MSMEs in this period of trial. Standard Chartered Bank in particular is ensuring the working capital needs are being addressed on priority as per RBI's mandates. Disbursements sanctioned under the Atmanirbhar Bharat scheme commenced in July 2020, and Manish explained that "Rs. 1.9 lakh crore out of the Rs. 3 lakh crores were sanctioned and about Rs. 1.4 lakh crore was disbursed initially". Manish is positive that the gradual uptake in the economy will refine the disbursals which currently stand at 41%.

Accelerated Tech Adoption

Quoting a recent research Manish believes that India is certainly at an inflection point with regards to digitalization, he further shared that 30% of the MSMEs adopted some sort of e-commerce functionality or a business website, and more than 50% of MSMEs have transitioned to executing business through Video Conferencing. He stated that Banks have proactively ensured the majority of routine functions have been digitized to drive efficiencies that provide seamless execution of trade and non-trade transactions.

Business Continuity Planning and Equity play

Ajay Thakur firmly believes that equity is an important driver for small, mid, and large enterprises. The eight-year-old platform curated by NSE assists SME promoters in entering equity markets and eases compliance procedures involved in the listing of an enterprise. He opines "In the COVID phase, we saw the listing of almost 15 companies who have raised almost Rs. 100 crores through the stock exchange". To encourage the equity culture among MSMEs, NSE is taking proactive steps to organize webinars, collaborate with Government SME ministries, and other players. Ajay emphasized that getting listed is a crucial move, as companies in this sector will get good market visibility, strike a balance between equity and debt thereby reducing cash flows and bringing down interest rates.

Expanding the role of credit rating agencies

Shankar cites that companies with decent credit ratings have sustained in the aftermath of the pandemic, he further adds that they were in a better position with regard to raising and management of funds. He feels that the technology adoption by MSMEs is giving them a competitive edge, scaling down costs and is a positive development for the growth of this sector.

Supply Chain Financing

Banks are poised to play a key role in this emerging area which will open up avenues for SMEs to leverage global value chains. Standard Chartered is already devising mechanics based on data analytics and machine learning to observe the transaction patterns and predict incremental requirements. This will enable insights into risk planning and improvisations on the credit delivery front.

In conclusion, the panel unanimously agreed that the pandemic is the best time for MSME businesses to introspect in order to emerge stronger and forge ahead with renewed vigour and optimism.

Transaction Banking in the COVID-19 world

The pandemic has called for robust revamps across sectors and the pace of digital adoption has accelerated at break-neck speed. Mridu Bhandari from Network18 gets into a conversation with Apurva Jain, Head, Transaction Banking & Cash Management, India, Standard Chartered, Praveena Rai, COO, NCPI, and Ajay Adiseshan, Founder and CEO Playmate to understand this surge in digital and its impact on the Banking and Finance sector with a focus on Transaction Banking.

Apurva Jain opines that COVID has forced organizations to reduce third party dependence and look for solutions within, disruption has caused the Bank to think differently across 3 broad segments, payments & collections, finance and customer relations. Elucidating with an example, he adds that verification mechanisms such as eKYC virtually has reduced the stress on physical interactions thus enabling convenience and speed. He further lauds the efforts of NCPI and companies such as Paymate in helping shape digital processes and ensuring customer gratification across levels.

Praveena believes this is a golden moment as digital transactions have risen exponentially despite the slump in economic activity. She shares an interesting statistic about how close to 15MN QR codes have been initiated, fintech companies are constantly innovating through digital mediums such as WhatsApp and the like to reach out to their consumers and ensure seamless payment options.

Ajay Adiseshan, Founder & CEO, Paymate feels that the operations of enterprise customers have been disrupted due to remote working which has played on the trust element involved in digital transactions. But on the upside, he sees tremendous opportunity for partnership models to merge where banks and fintech companies can combine forces to cater to innovative solutions in the providing digital services to their consumers.

The panellists further delved on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), Data analytics, and other such technologies are enabling innovations, speeding processes whether it is the deployment of Blockchain by Standard Chartered Bank or the launch of the VAJRA app by NCPI. Their aim is to maximise efficiencies across operations ensuring instant customer gratification. Ajay explained how Paymate has been collaborating with Banks for payment automation processes.

Yet another topic of interest was the SMB sector, their digital requirements, and how the Banks, Financial Organizations, and Digital providers are addressing the concerns of this sector, as they were one of the worst-hit by the pandemic. Each panellist explained how they are working on multiple automation solutions to create an ecosystem conducive to the growth of SMBs.

Commenting on changed consumer behaviour, Apurva cited an interesting global survey that claims that 64% of people think the world will become fully digital by 2025 but 87% of people from India feel that India will become totally cashless by 2025. This only strengthens the case that Digitization is here to stay and organizations need to say ahead of the curve to survive and sustain in the disruption and opportunity created by the pandemic.

Wealth Management in times of the Pandemic

Living in the VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity) world as rightly pointed out by Vikram Hosangady of KPMG, the COVID-19 pandemic has defied the business fraternity and fast forwarded tech adoptions at a neck-break pace. Amid the uncertainty and disruption, wealth managers are holding clients in good stead ensuring their capital find quality havens and addressing their concerns in this challenging scenario.

Mridu Bhandari from CNBC-TV18 engages with some of the country's formidable names in the wealth management space to decipher the impact of the pandemic on wealth creation, wealth preservation strategies, and the trends to watch out for in the Asset Management business. The panellists comprised Samrat Khosla, MD and Head, Wealth Management, Standard Chartered Bank, India, Rajesh Saluja, CEO & MD, Ask Wealth Advisors, and Vikram Hosangady, Partner & Head, Clients and Markets, KPMG India.

Samrat Khosla opened the discussion on how Standard Chartered Bank is taking appropriate measures to counter wealth erosion by timely engagement with ultra HNIs in this fragile period of flux. The Bank has a dual care system which ensures an open communication channel between the customers and the wealth advisors, emphasis on a responsive and prompt advisory service to keep the clients informed and secured.

Rajesh Saluja emphasised on how the HNI community is coming off age, and is showing maturity and resilience in the face of the pandemic by staying invested, though there have been cases of fee reduction and movement of investments to the fixed income options. He further spoke about the Pandemic sparking an interest in investments in the US markets, investments in gold, and the HNI community taking a keen interest in technology through private equity. At the outset Rajesh firmly believes that COVID-19 has not impacted the long-term potential of the wealth management industry.

Talking about the evolving profile of the HNIs, Vikram Hosangady commented on how the current generation has a gregarious appetite to risk as compared to the patriarchs or matriarchs of the earlier generations. The new breed of HNIs is experimental in nature and are willing to consider a host of alternative investment opportunities. They are willing to put their bets on start-ups and are taking up direct investments in those showcasing a promising future. Samrat went on to highlight the conscientious behaviour of HNIs/ultra HNIs, apart from taking risks, how they are also purpose-driven and are displaying a growing affinity towards ESG (Environment, Social, Governance) portfolios.

All panellists agreed on the speed of technology adoption caused by the pandemic and how processes have been streamlined, paper-work barring the physical mandatories have been reduced, thus driving higher efficiencies. However, Rajesh Saluja cautions that unlike the West Indians prefer socializing and hence a hybrid model of human coupled with a digital approach will have to be deployed to service the ultra HNI community.

The panel concluded with each panellist reaffirming the mantras of watchful asset allocation, usage of technology appropriately to serve the customers, and ensuring quality investments.

Retail Banking Transformation in the COVID world

The pandemic has caused seismic shifts across Industries, and the Retail Banking sector is one such sector which has felt the impact of such changes. India is at a very interesting inflection point as Banks are transforming paradigms, changing the rules of the game and creating phygital (merging of physical and digital assets) spaces to ensure customer confidence is intact while also tackling a host of business challenges.

Mridu Bhandari, special correspondent, CNBC-TV18 has an engaging discussion with Kusal Roy, Head - Consumer, Private & Business Banking, Standard Chartered Bank, India , Rajesh Kumar, MD & CEO, TransUnion CIBIL, and TR Ramachandran, Group Country Manager, VISA, India & South Asia. The corporate leaders discussed how they are creating the future that shall be conducive to survive in the aftermath of the pandemic and their current strategies in dealing with the digital transformation and shift in consumer behavior across the Retail Banking sector.

Speaking on the transition to moving most customer centric processes online in a short span of time, Kusal Roy mentioned that Standard Chartered has been holistically geared at adapting to the new normal, synchronizing resources and devising new ways of functioning in the pandemic.

Talking on the drastic reduction in impulse buying and loan enquiries, Rajesh Kumar commented that from the supply side there has been a change in the lending appetite and on the consumer, side there has been a reduction in discretionary spends, shifting to need based buying/borrowing.

Ramachandran highlighted the global scenario on credit card spending, and how particularly in the US, economic stimulus packages are causing consumers to repay loans, post opening of the lockdown. Speaking in the context of India, he further added, banks have taken a cautious approach on provisions, given the two phases of loan moratoriums.

Further talking on moratoriums, Kusal Roy emphasized on how they have successfully maintained an open communication channel with their customers thereby ensuring debt management efficacy.

Panelists also threw light on adoption of digital warfare such as AI, chatbots, machine learning capabilities and how the ecosystem is ripe for such technologies, thus propelling innovation in products and services. Important aspects of the discussion also included the shift from credit cards to debit cards and its impact on retail banking, consumer behavior with regards to contactless delivery mechanism and how banks are building resources to support such demands. Rajesh also spoke about the how CIBIL is deploying data and technology to create solutions such as the new credit vision score that shall be easy to integrate, for the lending community.

With the bulk of transactions moving to the digital sphere, cyber crimes are on the rise, Ramachandran commented on how VISA is closely working with the Central Bank, FIU and Banking clients on preventive strategies to tackle the menace of cyber frauds.

Each of the panelist is optimistic on the revival of the Retail Banking sector in the coming months, as they are seeing an uptake of several variables that will ensure India’s growth story.

RBI announces special OMOs of Rs 10,000 crore each on May 6

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on April 29 announced special Open Market Operations (OMOs) under which it will do simultaneous purchase and sale of Government Securities (G-sec) on May 6 for Rs 10,000 crore each.

OMOs refer to the sale or purchase of bonds by the RBI to manage the liquidity in the system and bond yields.

"On a review of current liquidity and financial conditions, the Reserve Bank of India has decided to conduct simultaneous purchase and sale of Government securities under Open Market Operations (OMOs) for an aggregate amount of Rs10,000 crore each on May 06, 2021," the RBI said.

Early this month, the RBI announced Rs 1 lakh crore G-sec acquisition plan to give comfort to the bond markets. The plan was to enable a stable and orderly evolution of the yield curve amidst comfortable liquidity conditions. “The endeavour will be to ensure congenial financial conditions for the recovery to gain traction. For Q1 of 2021-22, therefore, it has been decided to announce a G-SAP of Rs 1 lakh crore,” the RBI said.

In addition to the G-SAP plan, the RBI will also continue to deploy regular operations under the LAF, longer-term repo/reverse repo auctions, forex operations and open market operations including special OMOs to ensure liquidity conditions evolve in consonance with the stance of monetary policy, the RBI governor said.

ICRA revises down India's GDP growth forecast to 10.5% in FY22

Rating agency ICRA on April 28 revised down its forecast for India's GDP to grow by 10 to 10.5 percent in 2021-22 from the earlier projection of 10-11 percent, in the wake of the localised restrictions imposed by various state governments owing to the COVID-19 second wave.

"With sentiments souring, there may be some loss of demand particularly in the contact intensive sectors. Overall we have tempered our expectations of GDP expansion in Q1 of FY2022 to 20-25 percent from our earlier forecast of 27.5 percent," Aditi Nayar, Chief Economist, ICRA said.

The key downside risks to our forecast are a continuation of this wave of infections and an extension of the restrictions imposed so far, relatively severe restrictions being imposed in additional states, and the existing vaccines not being effective enough against the new variants of the virus, Nayar added.

ICRA cautioned that the localised restrictions have started to impede the sequential momentum in certain sectors, such as domestic airlines' passenger traffic, electricity demand, vehicle registrations and the generation of GST e-way bills.

However, the availability of vaccine imports enabling a faster coverage of the vaccination drive may offer a back-ended upside to the GDP growth in FY2022, after the disruption that may emerge in the near term. the rating agency added.

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"We foresee six sectors, namely, aviation; hotels, restaurants and tourism; media and entertainment-exhibitors; microfinance institutions; real estate-retail; and retail, to be at high risk from the second pandemic wave, much lower than in 2020," said K. Ravichandran, Deputy Chief Ratings Officer, ICRA Ltd.

Risk aversion among lenders could pose a challenge to credit growth, which the rating agency projects at 7.3-8.3 percent and 7.0-9.0 percent, respectively, for banks and non-banks for FY2022, ICRA said.

However, the banking system's solvency profile is better than the pre-COVID levels, affording it a buffer to absorb shocks, it added.

What should investors do with Axis Bank after Q4 results: buy, sell or hold?

Share price rose nearly 2 percent in early trade on April 28 after the company reported strong numbers for the quarter ended March 2021.

The private sector lender posted a net profit of Rs 2,677 crore for the quarter ended March 2021 following a sharp decline in bad loan provisions. The bank reported a loss of Rs 1,387.8 crore in the year-ago period.

Net interest income, the difference between interest earned and interest expended, grew 11 percent to Rs 7,555 crore in Q4 FY21 compared to Rs 6,807.7 crore in Q4 FY20, with net interest margin expanding 1 basis point YoY to 3.56 percent at the end of March 2021.

Here is what brokerages have to say about the stock and company after Q4 earnings:

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Tata Communications share price falls 3% on weak Q4 numbers

Steel Strips Wheels share price gains 3% on export orders Axis Bank Standalone March 2021 Net Interest Income (NII) at Rs 7,554.98 crore, up 10.98% Y-o-Y Macquarie | Rating: Outperform | Target: Rs 780

Strong provisioning, capital & liquidity buffers give us comfort and confidence of credit costs normalising over the next two years. The core P/BV at 1.5x FY23e is cheap.

Jefferies | Rating: Buy | Target: Raised to Rs 910 from Rs 840

The profit was ahead of estimate with lower provisions & higher treasury, while operating profit growth was weaker than peers, reflecting slower loan growth.

The uptick in disbursements & healthy CASA growth will lift loan growth. The slippages were a tad higher than estimates but manageable. COVID provisions at 1.4% offer cushion & lower credit cost will lift the RoA.

Credit Suisse | Rating: Outperform | Target: Raised to Rs 880 from Rs 770

The growth picked up & it continues to build buffers. The capital levels are healthy at 15.4% and we expect RoEs to improve to over 14%.

CLSA | Rating: Buy | Target: Raised to Rs 1,025 from Rs 1,000

The rerating should continue for the stock as the results were strong on asset quality with slippages of just Rs 5,000 crore.

We expect the company to deliver a 16%-17% core PPoP CAGR over FY21-23. It remains one of our top picks.

Kotak Institutional Equities | Rating: Buy | Target: Raised to Rs 810 from Rs 775

The headline gross NPL Ratio, net NPLs & slippage ratios declined QoQ. The upgrade in earnings reflects potential lower stress factoring COVID buffer.

Looking at FY22 towards a faster normalisation of return ratios and frontline large banks would benefit in this leg of the cycle.

JPMorgan | Rating: Neutral | Target: Rs 750

The growth is broad-based & corporate banking has seen a pick up in Q4. The slippages were 3.6% with two-third of it coming from the retail sector.

Goldman Sachs | Rating: Neutral | Target: Rs 742

The Q4 core missed estimates, while asset quality/loan growth was healthy. The bank lags behind other larger banks in terms of profitability. The RoA/RoE may rise to 1.5%/15% over FY22-23.

Prabhudas Lilladher | Rating: Accumulate | Target: Rs 770

Bank has maintained PCR of 72% and 80bps of COVID provisions over and above regulatory specific provisions on non-NPAs. With legacy NPAs provided for, better growth and initiatives are working gradually to move ratios towards a high ROE goal of 17-18%.

Motilal Oswal | Rating: Buy | Target: Rs 925

Axis Bank has delivered a strong performance and appears well-positioned to report robust earnings traction. Moreover, moderation in fresh slippages, coupled with improved underwriting and an increasing retail mix, would help maintain strong credit cost control.

Sharekhan | Rating: Buy | Target: Rs 900

Axis Bank is available at 2.2x/2.0x its FY2022E/FY2023E ABVPS. We believe valuations are reasonable and there is potential for re-rating as earnings pick up and the economic scenario normalises.

A conservative provisioning policy, comfortable capitalisation, overall franchise value, and a high provision coverage ratio (PCR) are positives, which will help the bank ride over medium-term challenges and provide support to growth and valuations.

At 09:21 hrs, Axis Bank was quoting at Rs 698.25, down Rs 1.05, or 0.15 percent on the BSE.

The share touched a 52-week high of Rs 800 and a 52-week low of Rs 333.05 on 16 February 2021 and 22 May 2020, respectively.

Currently, it is trading 12.72 percent below its 52-week high and 109.65 percent above its 52-week low.

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Unit No 401, IV Floor, Marathon Icon Marathon Nextgen Campus, Ganpat Rao Kadam Marg, Mumbai-400013 Opposite Peninsula Corporate Park, Lower Parel

Contact No: (022) 43431818

Corporate Office:

57, 2nd Floor Gandhi Nagar Sigra, Varanasi, UP- 221010

Contact No: (0542) 6600000

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