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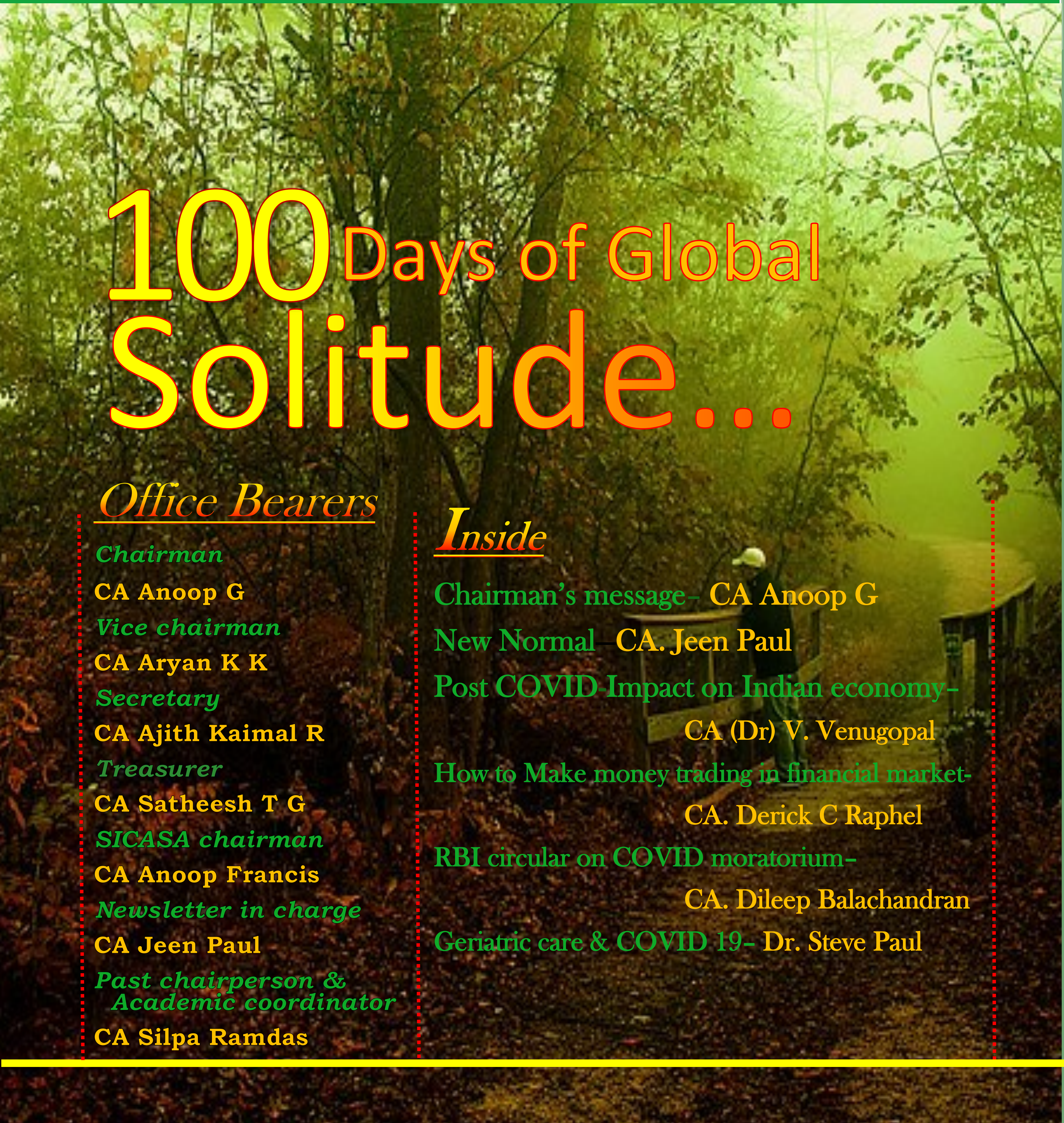

100 Days of Global Solitude...

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CA Jeen Paul

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Inside

Chairman's Message

Dear professional colleagues,

We are going through a very tough time as the nationwide lockdown has created lot of disturbance in our professional life. The inability to move out even to our office has severely affected our working pattern. None of us are really used to the "work at home" culture. Contrary to that we have invested heavily in creating office infrastructure.

For a small and medium sized practicing member, typically a season start with bank audits. This time however no bank audit took place in the month of April. Now when the bank branch audits were allotted, there was widespread discontent from members as the time allotted for completion of audit was not sufficient. It has been time and again emphasised by ICAI that the auditor is primarily duty bound by Auditing standards and Accounting Standards and thus must be able to withstand the pressure in time front. Some of the banks wanted 100% off site audit wherein data was made available online. The statutory auditor faces unprecedented risk of technological expertise.

Most of the practicing units mainly serve the business community who are the most affected section of the society. Many of our clients are completely closed down or working with huge loss. Most of them face huge working capital gaps. This is the time when we all need to give them a helping hand. Our expertise in finance should be made available to them. It is high time we should think beyond the statutory duties. We must be able to give more value added service like helping in arranging working capital fund, preparation of projected cash flow, plans to curtail or postpone fixed expenses etc. After all survival is the first priority in these testing times.

Many of our members also have expressed serious concern on our own working capital. We all have our monthly commitments in office but there is no certainty on income. In addition to that we have to plan and execute many audits online. We are all forced to curtail the time spent at the client site. In short we have to equip ourselves in technology and invest more for Technological infrastructure.

During the month our branch could conduct one webinar by CA Rajmohan on the subject " Practical approach to bank audit". The program was attended by more than 40 members. My special thanks to CA Rajmohan for his detailed deliberation on the subject. We are in the process of conducting more webinars. SIRC during the period conducted as many as 8 webinars which were all very informative and useful.

During the month one online career counselling program was conducted by CA Jai Ganesh. The program was at Hari Sri Vidya Nidhi School at Punkunnam, Thrissur and we conducted the same jointly with PTA of the school. I express my sincere gratitude to CA Jai Ganesh for his efforts.

As all of you the Institute had constituted ICAI Covid Relief Fund in the month of March. The president requested all the branches to take part in the campaign for collecting donation. As many as 51 members from our branch contributed either directly or through our branch. We could canvass an amount of Rs 4 Lakh to the above Fund. My special thanks to CA Ottapath Ramachandran for contributing Rs 1 Lakh. My sincere thanks to senior members who became the role models themselves by contributing generously in the initial days itself.

Last but not the least; I would appeal all members to give topmost priority to safety of ourselves and our staff. Please be aware about the safety guidelines given by the governments from time to time and strictly adhere to the same. I hope these difficult times would not last for long.

CA Anoop G

Chairman

New Normal Post COVID –19

Dear members,

God almighty always gives us great opportunity!

World has witnessed more than **"100 days of solitude"** with China emerged as the source country of Corona virus pandemic and first Locked down the Wuhan city on 23rd January 2020 and the world followed. Closed boarders curb the spread of pandemic, forcing to rely on domestic food chain systems and heath gears. The COVID-19 pandemic is driving the world economy to retreat from global economic integration. Reverse migration from inside and outside the country may hit global economy, which is hard to reconcile with. Countries are evacuating foreigners and the jobless migrant workers. These emotionally hit citizens started to reverse migrate to their home land.

In India, Migrant workers from Villages and small towns are the one who actually run the cities and industrial belt. Small earning of these migrant workers fuel developmental and survival instinct in their source villages. Past few weeks these migrant workers are mentally, physically, financially, and emotionally hit and cannot survive in destinations as they run out of their savings. Creating self-sufficient villages may be the new challenges of the Central and Local Governments in India apart from creating infrastructure for dwelling, other infrastructure like health care, education etc. and job opportunities for the revers migrants, many who left to destinations few generations ago and try to foot their homeland.

Normalcy of yesterdays are no longer exist. Researchers and policy makers are trying to predict the new normal for the post COVID-19 globally and domestically.

Sitting in our small town few professionals thinking and digitalizing their ideas related to COVID-19 to share with professional colleagues and other readers. Our senior member and researcher CA (Dr.) V Venugopal has made a detailed study and predicted positioning Indian economy post Covid-19. CA. Derick C Raphel, discuss about the basics and methods to make money trading in financial markets. Our young member CA. Dileep Balachandran shared a detailed analysis of RBI circular on Moratorium by banks from borrower's perspective. Special care of our elderly Geriatrics care need of the our due to coronavirus pandemic, Dr. Steve Paul, Asst. Professor & HOD of Geriatric medicine, Jubilee mission medical college, Thrissur, shares his professional expertise to care our elderly people.

Great disturbances bring great disruptions and great disruptions bring great opportunities and new ways of attaining goals.

CA Jeen Paul

News Letter In Charge

CA (Dr) V. Venugopal

POST COVID-19 AND ITS IMPACT ON INDIAN ECONOMY

Our County is facing an unprecedented situation due to COVID-19 (Corona Virus) which has not happened in this generation. The Country's lock down has entered the second month and the entire economy is at standstill and uncertain on when to regain its stability. In this context an attempt is made to analyze the post COVID - 19 economic situation.

The business and industry have now started opening up with some restrictions. The industry will be functioning for next six months with only about 25% capacity utilization. Most of the businesses will run in loss during 2020-21and cash flow is going to be affected severely. Banks now have surplus funds, but they are reluctant to lend due to the market uncertainties and the risks involved. Businessmen will find it difficult to pull on, if they are not able to pump in required funds and adopt drastic cost-cutting measures and methods.

In the post COVID scenario, present business models will undergo change and only smart players will survive. Consumer preferences will be for value-oriented products. Consumption pattern will totally change and consumers will be more discretionary in their purchases. Preference for luxury products will considerably reduce. Consumers' behavior will change, and they will go for products with competitive pricing. Products adding value to consumers will attract more demand. Manufacturers will start working at cost reduction.

Technology investments in business will increase considerably. Digital marketing will perk up. Online business will flourish. Sectors of online education will also pick up fast. 25 to 30% of employees in future will be working from home. All these adaption will naturally lead to cost reduction.

Retail sector employees' strength will get reduced by 15 to 20% due to retrenchments. Several small retailers including supermarkets will close down due to operating losses. Those who do business depending on bank loans will find it too difficult to survive in the post COVID scenario. Several real-estate companies will become bankrupt unless re-scheduling of existing loans and infusing of fresh funds at reduced rate of interest is offered to them. Tourism and hotel business is also going to be badly affected for next one year.

There will be a boost to pharmaceutical companies and India can become the manufacturing hub for pharmaceutical products in the world. Health-care and hygiene product manufacturers will pick up very well. People will become more health conscious and hence fruits and vegetables processing and food products businesses will pick up. Overseas and local travels of business men will be highly restricted and they will thereafter depend on technology for business conclaves which will considerably reduce the cost. Sale of two-wheelers and small cars may go up since people are likely to keep social distancing by avoiding mass rapid transport systems.

Oil price in the international market which fell to negative is expected to be low for next one year. Since India is the second largest in the world on consumption of oil, we will benefit much by saving on foreign exchange. Gold price which was $1600 per oz on 1st January has now increased to $1730 and may see further hikes. Interest rate will continue to be low at least for next one year. Sensex which crashed by 39% will pick up slowly and investors will find it a good time to invest. Foreign remittance to India is expected to be reduced by about 25%. Few lakhs of non-residents especially from Gulf Countries will be back home for good on losing their job and employing them will be a problem for the nation.

USA, with the support of UK, France, Germany, Japan and Australia may start an economic war against China, alleging that China is responsible for heavy casualties due to spread of COVID - 19. Lots of business houses from China are expected to be shifted out and India will become one of the most preferred and favored destination. Next to China, only India has mass young skilled workforce at low cost. Lot of employment is expected to be generated by 2021-22.

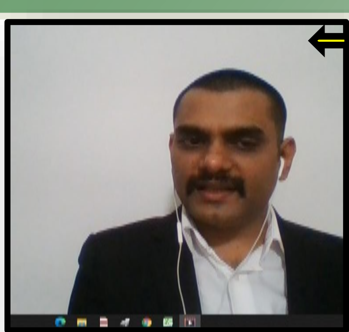
Indian economy is expected to shrink between 1.5 to 1.9% (growth in GDP) during 2020-21. However, IMF has predicted a growth of 7.4% for India during 2021-22. India is expected to come back to its real strength during 22-23 and we can expect a booming economy thereafter.

The business and industry is eagerly waiting for the economic stimulus plan of the Government which is long overdue. It is expected that an economic stimulus package of 8-10 lakh crores will be announced by the Central Government soon. The Government has to spend massively for infrastructure development which will generate huge employment. Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) and real estate sector require urgent support from the Government. RBI should force and push banks to come out of their fear and suspicion and consistently support industry and business that are desperate and are in need of funds for their continued operations.

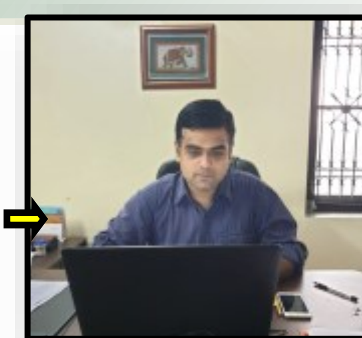
CA (Dr) V. Venugopal

The Author is a member of the Institute.

Photo Gallery



Address by Faculty CA. Rajmohan R in the webinar on the topic Bank Audit on 14/04/2020



Faculty CA. Jai Ganesh addressing the 12th Std students (Online) on carear counciling.

How to make money Trading in Financial Markets

CA. Derick C Raphael

Covid 19 has brought us the importance of secondary income to support our lifestyle and goals. Here we discuss an opportunity to earn a regular income from the movements in the financial market for CA's who are professionally trained to be methodical in their approach. As CA's we are good number crunchers and well versed in reading the financial statements. CA's has a special skill to work hard to update their knowledge and achieve their objectives. The skills of the CA's are exactly matching with the skills of a good trader and we can safely assume that a good Ca can be a good trader.

Trading is one of the toughest business in the world however once we master the tricks of the trade, we can easily make a living out of trading in financial markets. Since we discuss secondary income and regular income strategies, I prefer to discuss swing trading using technical analysis tools. As trading is a vast subject, I limit myself the 8 golden rules of trading.

1. You Must Know that You Know Nothing Extreme big losses occur when the trader falls in love with a market direction. He is 100% sure that his estimation is the right one. When he buys a stock and the stock falls, he considers the decline a chance to buy even cheaper and averages down his position. Nearly all the trading indicators show a hit rate of 50%. They are therefore sometimes wrong and sometimes right. Why should you be 100% right with your forecast? Trading is by far, more successful when **you know that you know nothing**. You had better make an assumption. You assume for instance that a stock will not fall again below its previous low at Rs.250/-. This assumption already gives you an answer about when you are wrong. At prices below Rs.250/- your assumption was wrong. Your stop loss is accordingly placed at this level. Taking into account the stop price, you can define the position size. As you know that you know nothing and that your forecast is only an assumption, you will exit the position in case you are proven wrong. You already knew that you only had a 50% winning chance. You will not become a millionaire just because you realised that your forecast was not infallible, but you will avoid many heavy losses. Provided you follow the tips below, you will make money despite the hit rate of around 50%.

2. Successful with Easy Rules : It is unbelievable what complicated methods some traders use. Some traders employ five or more indicators to get an entry signal. In doing so, they forget that most of the indicators only have a hit rate of 50 %. Combining several indicators does not improve the statistics. Imagine you would toss a coin. If you do that endlessly, the share between heads and tails will be a well-balanced 50/50. But there will be times when the tails remain ahead for several months or vice versa. It is therefore possible that you get tails 10 times in a row, then heads twice and then tails again 10 times. This could lead you to the conviction that you have an indicator with a high winning rate. On a long-term basis however, the hit rate will level out at 50 %. In order yet to make money you must gain more in the periods of higher hit rates than you lose in the periods of lower hit rates. Let us continue with the risk.

3. Risk Is the Only Thing You Can Determine As already mentioned, the average winning chance is around 50 %. We have no influence on this figure. We cannot determine in which direction the market or the stock is going to move. The only thing we can predetermine is the risk we are ready to take. You should therefore decide on your allowable loss (should the stop loss be activated) before the purchase. In practice, percentages between one and three % have stood the test of time. These values refer to the total available trading capital. Say there are Rs. 200,000/- on your account. You decided that your allowable loss per trade should amount to maximum 2 %. If everything goes wrong, you will allow a loss of only Rs. 4,000. Now you just need to define the position size in order to prevent higher losses at the stop loss level. Let us take a concrete example. You buy a stock at Rs. 50 and have assumed that the stock will not go below Rs. 40. Your account amounts to Rs. 200,000. You place your stop at Rs. 40. You take accordingly a risk of Rs. 10 per share. In order not to lose more than Rs. 4,000 you can purchase 400 shares at most. In such a way you can actively manage your risk. From now on you just need to gain more money in the cases where you are right than in the ones where you were wrong.

4. Take the Volatility into Account for the Stop Loss : Take the volatility of the stock or of the market into account. Stop loss prices are usually determined without considering the volatility. As a result, even small fluctuations in the opposite direction lead to a loss. Afterwards the stock resumes its movement in the previously forecasted direction. Do not let yourself get ejected from the market by normal market noise. With volatility, I mean the average bandwidth of a price. The bandwidth is the difference between the highest and the lowest price of the day. There is also an indicator that shows this value. It is the ATR (Average True Range). Let us assume that a stock makes daily RS. 2 moves on average. It would not be a good idea to place the stop loss within this bandwidth. One single day against your forecast would be enough to eject you from the market. Personally, I use the 2.5 of bandwidth. In this case I would therefore place the stop loss Rs. 5 below the entry price. However, the stop loss should not remain statically at the same level. You indeed need a strategy in order to adapt the stop loss. Let us have a closer look at that.

5. You Need an Exit Strategy : Nearly all traders place stops losses. They know accordingly when they wish to exit their position in the case of a loss. However, the minority of them determine how they exit a profitable position. The problems begin just after the purchase. You have bought and placed a stop. Well then? Your position is now profitable. Should you exit the position, increase it or simply adapt your stop loss? If you have not determined that before, uncertainty arises directly after the purchase. An integral trading system should answer the following:

- When do I enter the position (entry signal)? • With which position size? • Where do I place the stop? • How do I exit a profitable position.? We have already discussed the entry. Simply take an indicator you like. Nearly all of them have a hit rate of 50%. The size of the position and the stop have already been dealt with. Let us come to the exit.

- **6. Let Profits Run :**In order to make more profit on winning trades than losses on losing trades, we have to let profits run. I know you cannot hear or read that any longer. Everyone says this but concrete examples are frequently missing. When you let profits run you have no predetermined exit target therefore you remain invested until your stop is activated. I would like to show you here one of the several possible methods which allow you to achieve this objective. Let us stay with the above-mentioned example. You purchased a stock at RS. 50. The bandwidth of this stock is RS. 2. You placed the stop at RS. 45. You accordingly used the 2.5 bandwidth to define your stop loss. Should the stock rise by a bandwidth, i.e. from 50 to RS. 52, you adapt your stop level by one bandwidth. At RS. 52 you increase your stop to RS. 47. At 54 to 49 etc. You now remain invested until a RS. 5 retracement occurs. Thus, you let profits run and always risk RS. 5 with the chance of an even higher gain. Just imagine the stock goes up to RS. 100. Your stop would still be at RS. 95. If there is no movement down by a 2.5 bandwidth you stay in the market. You can also combine this strategy with your indicator. Should your indicator show an imminent trend reversal you just tighten your stop. Either to one or to two bandwidths. With this strategy you will in many cases win several times what you may lose on losing trades.

Please note as well, that you need a trend. No trend, no gain. When the stock does not move you cannot win anything. Trendless periods are therefore not winning periods. And believe me, there are a lot of trendless periods. Therefore you need endurance and patience.

7. Each Trader Needs His Own Idiosyncratic Strategy: Everyone must find their own strategy, tailored to their personality. Those who are rather impatient should avoid strategies which bring results only after some months. They will unconsciously change their strategy and enter or prematurely increase a position. How can you find out which strategy fits you most? You will find the answer under point 8.

8. Paper Trading before Real Money: Meanwhile there are many possibilities to trade virtually without risking your own money. Several platforms can be found on the Internet on which you can trade a virtual account with real prices. I can only recommend that every prospective trader spend some months training with such a platform before investing real money (https://www.moneycontrol.com). Beware however of the fact that with virtual trading you lose touch with real money. You would probably trade differently if your own money were at risk.

Conclusion

You will not achieve a long-term hit rate above 50%. Make more money in the winning periods than losses in the losing ones. Perform active risk management and let profits run. Look for your personal strategy and implement it profitably in the markets.

CA. Deric C Raphel. The Author is a member of the Institute.

CA Dileep Balachandran

Analysis of RBI circular on Covid 19

Analysis of RBI's Circular on Covid19 regulatory package dtd 27/03/2020 (ref: Circular No. RBI/2019-20/186 dtd 27/03/2020) from the Borrowers' perspective

This Article is meant to encapsulate and cast some light on some of the important provisions contained in the RBI's Circular ***ref: No. RBI/2019-20/186 on Covid19 regulatory package dtd 27/03/2020*** from the Borrowers' perspective and to serve as a basic guidance for the availing various reliefs proposed vide the said Circular.

In view of the Coronavirus (Covid 19) outbreak declared as a Pandemic by the World Health Organisation (WHO), the Hon'ble PM of the Nation had on 24th March 2020 for the first time imposed Nation-wide lockdown for 21 days until 14th April 2020 which stands further extended to 17th May 2020 but with certain concessionary riders vide Lockdown 3.0 announced on 01st May 2020 by the Union Government of India. The Union and various State Governments have implored upon the general public to observe restraint and caution against moving out of their own houses and to fight the spread of the virus by self-isolation and social distancing. Needless to mention, the curbs and restrictions have hit hard the business community as the customer walk-ins and trade enquiries have taken a serious jolt affecting its cash flows and working capital often managed with borrowed capital. Hence due to the Covid-19 outbreak, the business income (viz, more evidently in the MSME sector) and income of various direct and indirect dependant stakeholders stands badly affected severely impacting their ability to service the current monthly instalments and interest owed to their financiers. It was in this juncture that the RBI had for the first time in March 2020 come out with a Covid 19 Relief Package Circular/ Announcement intended to provide immediate relief to various Borrowers to tide over the Corona crisis immediately acting on the cue of the Union Government and taking into account the overall macro-economic factors and other indicators.

Following are some of the important provisions of the said Circular discussed and analysed vide this Article -

Rescheduling of Payments of Term Loans (TL)

Synopsis

'Lending Institutions' covers all the Commercial Banks (incl RRBs, SFBs, LABs), Cooperative Banks, All- India FIs and NBFCs (incl HFCs)

Borrowers would not have to pay the instalments during the moratorium period as regards TLs outstanding as on 01-03-2020.

'Term Loans' will include agricultural term loans, retail and crop loans.

'Instalments' would include principal &/or interest components, bullet repayments, EMIs, credit card dues falling due between March 1, 2020 to May 31, 2020.

Repayment schedule (& balance/residual tenor) of TL will be extended by 3 months.

Analysis/Inference-

Borrowers would not have to pay the instalments falling due between March 1, 2020 to May 31, 2020 ('moratorium period') as regards TLs outstanding as on 01-03-2020.

Borrower should apply for rescheduling payments of instalments in the moratorium period in terms of the concerned Bank's extant policies in this regard as may be duly approved by its Board in due course.

Borrower to ensure the concerned Bank deactivates/stops ECS/NACH mandate, if any in respect of TL instalments during the moratorium period upon approval of aforesaid request.

Interest will continue to accrue during the 3 months moratorium which will be adjusted & demanded in subsequent EMIs (when moratorium ends) which would entail a higher outflow than original demand.

In short, only deferment of demand is allowed during the moratorium period.

Borrower, may at his discretion, still park his excess money (after meeting all other indispensable expenses) in their loan account to reduce this extra interest accrued during moratorium period in subsequent EMIs.

Rescheduling of Payments of Working Capital Facilities (CC/OD)-

Synopsis

Borrowers would not have to service the interest applied in respect of the Working Capital facilities during the deferment period between March 1, 2020 to May 31, 2020.

Lending Institutions will be permitted to defer recovery of interest applied during the moratorium period.

The accumulated interest for the period will be paid after the expiry of the deferment period.

'Working Capital facilities" will include Cash Credit/Overdraft limits.

Analysis/Inference -

Borrowers would not have to pay the interest demand falling due between March 1, 2020 to May 31, 2020 ('deferment period') as regards CCs/ODs outstanding as on 31-03-2020.

Borrower should apply for rescheduling/ deferment of interest demands in the deferment period in terms of the concerned Bank's extant policies in this regard as may be duly approved by its Board in due course.

Borrower to ensure the concerned Bank deactivates/stops ECS/NACH mandate, if any in respect of CC/OD interest demand during the deferment period upon approval.

Interest will continue to accrue during the 3 months moratorium which will be demanded immediately in the subsequent month (when moratorium ends) which would entail a higher outflow than original demand.

In short, only deferment of demand is allowed during the deferment period.

Borrower, may at his discretion, still park his excess money (after meeting all other indispensable expenses) in their CC/OD account to reduce this extra interest accrued during deferment period in subsequent month.

Easing of Working Capital Financing-

Synopsis

In respect of working capital facilities (CCs/ ODs) sanctioned, lending institutions have been permitted to recalculate the drawing power (DP) by reducing margins and/or by reassessing the working capital cycle for the borrowers.

Analysis/Inference -

Borrowers would have to freshly assess the working capital cycle and revise the estimated/projected turnover in the light of economic fallout from COVID-19.

Borrower will have to prepare a latest updated list of Stock Statement reporting the latest Debtors, Stocks and Creditors figures as drawn from the books (latest, after incorporating Covid 19 fall-out in business), that can be realistically explained to the satisfaction of the Bank.

Based on the such revised financial projection, fresh WC cycle assessment and revised Stock Statement, the Borrower will have to apply to the Lending Institution to sanction necessary amendments in existing sanction including Ad-hoc enhancement/TOD/ concessions including by way of reduction in margin to tide over the economic crisis.

Classification as Special Mention Account (SMA) and Non-Performing Asset (NPA)-

Synopsis

Since the changes in credit terms (viz, moratorium/deferment/recalculation of the 'drawing power') is permitted to the borrowers to specifically tide over the economic fallout from COVID-19, the same will not be treated as concessions granted due to financial difficulties of the borrower, and hence will not result in asset classification downgrade.

The asset classification of TLs which are granted relief shall be determined on the basis of revised due dates and the revised repayment schedule. Similarly, WC facilities where relief is provided, the SMA and the out-of-order status shall be evaluated considering the application of accumulated interest immediately after the completion of the deferment period as well as the revised terms, as may be permitted.

The rescheduling of payments will not qualify as a default for the purposes of supervisory reporting and reporting to credit information companies (CICs) by the lending institutions. CICs shall ensure that the actions taken by lending institutions pursuant to the above Circular do not adversely impact the Borrowers' credit history.

Analysis/Inference -

Due to the non-payment of instalment/ interest dues/grant of concessions during the moratorium/deferment period, the Borrower's account will not deteriorate and status quo of account position as at March 1 2020 shall be maintained until end of the moratorium/deferment period (i.e. 31st May 2020).

Asset classification of TLs after the end of moratorium period will be determined on the basis of revised payment schedule.

Similarly, slippage to SMA/NPA category in case of CCs/ODs will be evaluated based on the servicing of interest accumulated during the deferment period and applied / demanded immediately after completion of deferment period and revised terms.

The RBI has called on the individual Financial Institution (s) to come out with their own Board approved policies to give effect to its special Covid-19 Relief package as enumerated vide its Circular discussed herein. While some Banks are currently in the process of framing their own policies in this regard and while others have already come up with their own Board approved policies, we can expect them to roll-over their own existing schemes in due course.

Summary

Lastly, in these difficult times we as Partners in Nation Building must lead the way in facilitating the containment of pandemic Covid 19 at both our fraternity level and familial/social circles by personally ensuring and advising the connected stakeholders, adherence to the various Government guidelines promulgated in this regard including social distancing norms and basic hygiene. The power of positivity is the key to sustain us during these demanding and testing times. At this juncture, we have to remain pretty optimistic that a world full of business opportunities that needs to be dearly explored awaits us when we are done with the economic fallout from the Covid 19 outbreak. •

The Author is a member of the Institute.





Geriatric Care & Covid-19

Dr. Steve Paul

Geriatrics is that branch of Medicine that deals with diseases of the old. Old age is not a disease and old age does not mean one has to silently suffer.

I n this era of fast-paced life, the joint family system no longer exists. Nuclear families are struggling to balance work related tensions and spending time with their spouses and child (ren). Tending to issues of aged parents is a burden for most. Hence, they are neglected in the twilight years. Added to this is the growing proportion of elderly citizens in the population. The percentage of elderly in the population in the UK and US ranges between 18-22%, with higher percentages in Japan and China. India has a younger population predominantly, with elders just constituting an average of 8-9%. Kerala stands at a higher average of 11% of the population being elderly. In the coming years, we ourselves would struggle to cope with the various needs of the elderly.

How are the health problems of the elderly people different?

The health problems of the elderly are different in many ways. Illnesses differ in the mode of presentation. An older person may already be suffering from chronic illnesses and a new disease may be mistaken for worsening of a disease. Sometimes new diseases, which may present as recurrent falls, are wrongly interpreted to be a result of ageing. Clinical findings such as blood pressure targets are different in the older patient and lack of knowledge about this both among patients and doctors lead to adverse consequences. As our body ages, the liver and kidney functions decrease. Since most of the medicines are metabolized by these, prescribing medications at regular adult doses can bring about drug related adverse events, or drug toxicities. Besides, some medications are inappropriate for use in elderly because they cause more harm than good. Most of the elderly patients suffer from many diseases such as heart related problems and kidney diseases, Diabetes and hypertension. One drug can interact with another and can prevent effective action or have adverse consequences. Therefore, drug modification is essential in prescribing for elderly.

What are the common problems of old age?

Old people suffer from multiple diseases. Hypertension Diabetes, Stroke, Heart disease, Bone related problems, Psychiatric illnesses and so on. However, what is important to know is that most diseases do not present in the same way as they do in adults. They present a set of symptoms – called Geriatric syndromes- Like Falls, memory loss, tiredness, weight loss, decrease in mobility or eating, urinary incontinence etc. These Geriatric syndromes are a common final pathway for disease presentation. Often these are overlooked by the family and sometimes by doctors and wrongly attributed to old age itself.

Elderly in the COVID era.

The dreaded COVID is known to affect the older person catastrophically. As the disease is known to have a wide infectivity, this can only enter the house if one brings it in. Therefore, it would be prudent to remain indoors during this stage. Our older people are wise enough, which is why this number among those affected is still low. However, if our guard is lowered by facilitating visitors into homes, this could be disastrous.

The lockdown, though it has helped arrest the spread of the virus, has had a huge toll on the mental health of the older person. Barred from relatives and family from visiting, they are pushed into depression and a feeling of hopelessness. Added to the appalling new reports, they worry for their or their kith and kin, many of who are residing in foreign land. Unable to step out to buy medicines, and fear of going to the hospital, many are prone to develop complications. Absence of the usual home nurse adds to their woes.

What can be done?

Stay safe : as far as possible, avoid going out doors. If you have to, use masks and sanitizers appropriately. Though it is advisable not to go to crowded places, a short walk to a less crowded supermarket shouldn't do harm. Of course, with proper protection

Develop a positive attitude: Stop flicking through the many news channels. All of them portray disturbing news, about deaths, icus and ventilators. At this age, you don't want to be hearing that.

Spend time on yourself : surround yourself with positive people. Read a book , watch a movie, draw or pen something, listen to music or meditate for a while. That would help ease out disturbing thoughts and keep you positive.

Exercise : With most living in villas and houses, a 30 min walk in the front yard would do good to keep one fit and healthy. It would relieve boredom and the strain from exercise would ensure a good night sleep.

Author is an Asst. Professor &
HOD of Geriatric Department
M/s Jubilee Mission Hospital, Thrissur