



Dr. Ashok Ajmera (FCA), CMD & CEO

Dr. Ashok Ajmera's column as on July 03, 2021

Smallcaps outperform during the week; advisable to remain stock specific..

- 1) Indian bourses ended the week in red led by concerns on valuation front and high inflation. On a weekly basis, both S&P BSE Sensex and Nifty fell by 0.80 percent for the week.
- 2) The BSE midcap index declined marginally by 0.2 percent. On the other the smallcap index rallied by 2.2 percent for the week. Smallcap companies like Sharda Motor Industries, Nelco, ISGEC Heavy Engineering, Route Mobile, Happiest Minds Technologies, Nucleus Software Exports, ION Exchange, Power Mech Projects, Happiest Minds, Shree Renuka Sugars, Uttam Sugar Mills rallied significantly during the week.
- 3) During the week, Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) sold worth Rs. 5,416.84 Crore while domestic institutional investors (DIIs) bought equities worth Rs. 6,418.3 crore.
- 4) The Indian rupee depreciated against the US dollar and touched two month low against the US dollar. It ended 56 paise lower at 74.74 on July 2 against its June 25 closing of 74.18.

Key recent major developments..

- 1) India's economic damage due to the second wave of COVID-19 and subsequent lockdowns will remain restricted to the April to June quarter, Moody's Investors Service said in a new macroeconomic outlook. "We currently expect India's real GDP to grow at 9.6 per cent in 2021 and 7 per cent in 2022," it said. "With states now easing restrictions, economic activity in May is likely to signify the trough." It assessed the overall economic effect of the second wave to be softer than that during the first wave of pandemic last year, although delivery of and access to vaccines will determine the durability of recovery."We expect the current lockdowns to have less of an adverse impact on economic activity than the nationwide lockdown in April 2020 because the latest restrictions have been more targeted, localised and less stringent," said Moody's.
- 2) The country's foreign exchange reserves surged by USD 5.066 billion to touch a record high of USD 608.999 billion in the week ended June 25, 2021, RBI data showed. In the previous week ended June 18, the reserves had declined by USD 4.418 billion to USD 603.933 billion. During the week under review, the increase in the forex reserves was on account of a rise in foreign currency assets (FCA), a major component of the overall reserves, Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) weekly data showed. FCA rose by USD 4.7 billion to USD 566.24 billion. Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves. Gold reserves rose by USD 365 million to USD 36.296 billion in the period under review, the data showed. The special drawing rights (SDRs) with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) remained unchanged at USD 1.498 billion. The country's reserve position with the IMF increased marginally by USD 1 million to USD 4.965 billion in the week, the data showed.



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- 3) India's domestic factory orders and production contracted to an 11-month low in June as measures to contain the coronavirus put manufacturing into "reverse gear". The IHS Markit India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) slipped to 48.1 in June from 50.8 in May and 55.5 in April. This was, for the first time since July 2020, below the critical no-change mark of 50. "The intensification of the Covid-19 crisis in India had a detrimental impact on the manufacturing economy. Growth of new orders, production, exports and input purchasing was interrupted in June as containment measures aimed at bringing the pandemic under control restrained demand. In all cases, however, rates of contraction were softer than during the first lockdown," said Pollyanna De Lima, Economics Associate Director at IHS Markit.
- 4) S&P Global cut its growth forecasts for some of Asia's top economies including India, the Philippines and Malaysia on Monday, offsetting upgrades to China and South Africa and much of Latin America. The estimates, which feed into S&P's closely-followed sovereign ratings, saw India's growth projection chopped to 9.5% from 11% due to its Covid-19 outbreak, the Philippines' lowered to 6% from 7.9% and Malaysia's downgraded to 4.1% from 6.2%. In contrast, China's forecast was nudged up to 8.3% from 8%, Brazil's was hoisted to 4.7% from 3.4%, Mexico's to 5.8% from 4.9% while those of South Africa, Poland and Russia were lifted to 4.2%, 4.5% and 3.7%, respectively, from 3.6%, 3.4% and 3.3%. "The top risk facing emerging market economies (EMs) is a slower-than-expected rollout of the vaccines," S&P's economists said in new report, adding that the pandemic would only subside once vaccinations "reach a level consistent with herd immunity". In Asia's emerging economies, vaccines are currently being administered at a rate of 0.2 doses per 100 people per day. At this rate, S&P estimated it would take another 23 months for 70% of EM Asia's population to be fully vaccinated. The second big risk facing emerging economies, it said, was if strong U.S. growth and inflation cause an early tightening of U.S. monetary policy which then pushes up the dollar and makes servicing debt denominated in the U.S. currency more costly.
- 5) The Government on Monday announced 1.1 Lakh crore loan guarantee scheme for COVID affected sectors. This includes Rs. 50,000 crore for ramping up health infrastructure in tier-2 and 3 cities, and Rs. 23,220 crore additional allocation with primary focus on paediatric care. The loan guarantee scheme would provide 75 per cent coverage for new projects and 50 per cent for those in expansion mode. Maximum loan of up to Rs. 100 crore would be given for up to three years at the interest rate capped at 7.95 per cent. "Other than the eight metro cities, health infrastructure in all other areas will be focused. If the focus is on aspirational districts 65 per cent cover will be provided," Finance Minister Sitharaman said. Other measures announced on Monday include:
 - a) Additional 1.5 lakh crore for Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme
 - b) Free tourist visas for 500,000 visitors, which could have a financial impact worth Rs. 100 Crore
 - c) Incentives for creating new jobs extended to end-March 2022
 - d) Facilitate micro-finance loans to 2.5 million persons, with guarantee up to Rs. 7,500 Crore
- 6) India Ratings & Research on June 25 cut its forecast for India's gross domestic product (GDP) growth in 2021-22 to 9.6 percent from 10.1 percent earlier due to the outbreak of the second wave of COVID-19. Adding, the growth in India's GDP may further fall to 9.1 percent if the country's vaccination drive is delayed by around three months and the country's entire adult population is not vaccinated by the end of the year. India Ratings in its report said that if the pace of vaccination is maintained close to the 21 June level, then India will be able to vaccinate its entire adult population by the end of the year. The cut in GDP growth estimate is on account of a consumption slowdown due to the outbreak of the second wave of COVID-19, the rating agency said, adding that, unlike the first wave of COVID-19, the second wave of COVID-19 has spread to the rural areas. India Ratings said that it expects the country's private final consumption expenditure growth to come in at 10.8 percent in 2021-22 after it slowed down due to the outbreak of the second wave of COVID-19.
- 7) The direct tax collections for FY22, as on June 15, 2021 show that net collections are at Rs. 1.85 trillion as compared to Rs. 92,762 crore over the corresponding period of the preceding year, representing an increase of 100.4% over the collections of the preceding year. The net direct tax collections include Corporation Tax (CIT) at Rs. 74,356 crore (net of refund) and Personal Income Tax (PIT) including Security Transaction Tax (STT) at Rs. 1.11 trillion (net of refund), said Ministry of Finance on Wednesday. The gross collection of direct taxes (before adjusting for refunds) for FY22 stands at Rs. 2.16 trillion as compared to Rs. 1.37 trillion in the corresponding period of the preceding year. This includes Corporation Tax (CIT) at Rs. 96,923 crore and Personal Income Tax (PIT), including Security Transaction Tax (STT), at Rs. 1.19 trillion. Minor head wise collection comprises Advance Tax of Rs 28,780 crore, Tax Deducted at Source of Rs 1.56 trillion, Self-Assessment Tax of Rs. 15,343 crore; regular assessment tax of Rs 14,079 crore; dividend distribution tax of Rs 1,086 crore and tax under other minor heads of Rs. 491 crore. "Despite extremely challenging initial months of the new fiscal , the Advance Tax collections for the first quarter of the FY22 stand at Rs. 28,780 crore as against advance tax collections of Rs. 11,714 crore for the corresponding period of the immediately preceding financial year, showing a growth of approximately 146%. This comprises



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Corporation Tax (CIT) at Rs. 18,358 crore and Personal Income Tax (PIT) at Rs. 10,422 crore. This amount is expected to increase as further information is received from banks," the ministry said.

- 8) Wholesale inflation in the country touched a significant high of 12.94 percent in May, as the constant rise in cost of fuel, including petrol, LPG and high speed diesel percolated down into the economy and a low base effect pushed up figures. Measured by the Wholesale Price Index (WPI), wholesale inflation in India began FY22 with a major rise. It had already spiked in the previous month of April when it reached 10.94 percent, up from March's 7.39 percent, and February's 4.17 per cent. The pace of inflation has now accelerated for the fifth-month in a row.
- 9) India's retail inflation shot up to six-month high of 6.3 per cent in May, after easing to a three-month low of 4.23 per cent in April, according to the government data released on Monday. Inflation, based on Consumer Price Index (CPI), has breached the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) target range for the first time after five months.
- 10) Industrial production grew by as much as 134.4 per cent in the month of April, mainly on account of a low base from last year, government data released on Friday showed. The government has held back the release of complete data of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) for April, as was done for the same month last year due to the coronavirus lockdown. Factory output, as measured by the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), rose 22.4 per cent in March 2021 and had contracted by a massive 57.3 per cent in the April month last year as a coronavirus-induced lockdown froze economic activity. The Centre had on March 25, 2020 enforced a nationwide lockdown to curb the spread of coronavirus. However, industrial growth was flat in April if we compare the IIP to that in the same month of 2019. This indicates that the nascent economic recovery has been impacted by the second wave of the pandemic. Manufacturing sector output, which accounts for more than three-fourths of the entire index, registered a growth of 197.1 per cent as against a de-growth of (-) 66 per cent in the year-ago period.
- 11) A Finance Ministry report has said that faster vaccine coverage and frontloading of fiscal measures announced in this year's budget would be the major factors in boosting the investment and consumption cycles and, in turn, reviving the economy. The Monthly Economic Review for May, released by the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) on Wednesday, noted that in the fourth quarter of FY21 growth in capex generated positive spillovers for consumption, including in the contact-sensitive sectors, these steps would facilitate recovery post the second wave. Further, a healthy monsoon forecasts bodes well for continued momentum in agricultural growth, it said. With state-level lockdown restrictions being more adaptive to learnings from the first wave, manufacturing and construction are expected to experience a softer economic shock in the current quarter, it said. "As we cautiously recuperate from the second wave, rapid vaccination and frontloading of the fiscal measures planned in the Union Budget hold key to invigorating the investment, and thereby consumption, cycle in the coming quarters," it said. It added that quickening the pace and coverage of vaccination is critical to help India heal and regain the momentum of economic recovery. The DEA noted that provisional GDP estimates available for January-March quarter (Q4) of FY 2020-21 confirm a V-shaped recovery in India's economic prospects in the second half of the year, after an unprecedented Covid-19 induced contraction.
- 12) Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections at over Rs 1.02 lakh crore in the month of May 2021. The monthly collection is 27 percent lower as compared to April 2021, when the GST revenue had peaked to a record-high of Rs 1.41 lakh crore. The gross revenue for the month of May, stated as Rs 1,02,709 crore, includes a collection of Rs 17,592 crore in form of CGST, Rs. 22,653 crore SGST and Rs. 53,199 crore IGST (including Rs. 26,002 crore collected on import of goods), said a statement issued by the Finance Ministry. The revenue collected through cess is Rs. 9,265 crore (including Rs. 868 crore collected on import of goods). "The above figure includes GST collection from domestic transactions till 4th of June since taxpayers were given various relief measures in the form of waiver/reduction in interest on delayed return filing for 15 days for the return filing month May'21 in the wake of Covid pandemic second wave," the government said.
- 13) The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) kept repo rate unchanged for the sixth consecutive time at 4 per cent and maintained the policy stance as Accommodative. The six-member monetary policy committee (MPC), however, revised the growth projection downward to 9.5 per cent from 10.5 per cent for the current financial year and revised the inflation projection upward to 5.1 per cent. "The MPC also decided unanimously to continue with the accommodative stance as long as necessary to revive and sustain growth on a durable basis and continue to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the economy, while ensuring that inflation remains within the target going forward," said RBI governor Shaktikanta Das while announcing the policy review decision.

Ajcon Global's observations and view..

- 1) For the week, domestic bourses ended in red led by valuation concerns and high inflation. However on Friday, the benchmark indices did erase some earlier losses owing to positive US employment data and other positive US economic indicators. Buoyancy was witnessed in companies having business models for the new age like Happiest Minds Technologies, Route Mobile, Nucleus Software Exports, HFCL, Vinati Organics etc. Positive factors like rally in commodities, unlock in major states led by significant decline of COVID-19 cases in the second wave with



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recoveries surpassing new cases by a big margin on a daily basis, vaccination drive going strongly, positive GDP figure, strong Q4FY21 result by majority of the Companies with good management commentary for the future are supporting sentiments. In addition to liquidity provided by FPIs in equities, there is good spike in retail participation from Tier II and Tier III cities as people have become more financial literate in COVID-19 crisis.

- 2) Investors are also hopeful that vaccine shortages will be resolved in some months as vaccine manufacturers' ramp up supplies. The entry of new vaccines is also expected to ease the supply crunch. India has given the first dose of covid antidote to 34.46 Crore beneficiaries in the nationwide vaccination till date. According to a government official, two billion doses of Covid-19 vaccines will be made available in the country between August and December, enough to vaccinate the entire population.
- 3) Key domestic factors like good GST collections in May 2021 despite second wave of COVID-19, low interest regime, support by Finance Ministry through various schemes, positive GDP data, good proposals presented in Union Budget 2021-22 will always keep bulls in the hunt for long term. Improved US GDP data, talks about US\$6 trillion package in US will also support bulls. The Nifty valuations are trading in the range of 35x-40x. Q4FY21 results season has been good so far led by SBI, Asian Paints, Reliance Industries, L&T, Hindustan Unilever, Bajaj Finserv, Bajaj Finance, Shriram Transport Finance, SAIL, Tata Steel, Tata Elxsi, Tata Coffee, UPL, Siemens, Bosch, Borosil Renewables, Orient Electric, Godrej Consumer Products, HDFC Life, SBI Cards, Castrol, Marico, Torrent Pharma, Birla Corp, Container Corporation of India, DCB Bank, Bank of Maharashtra, Dr. Lal Path Labs, Lux Industries, Indoco Remedies, Angel Broking, TCI, TCI Express, Shakti Pumps etc. No doubt Q4FY21 results have been strong and encouraging but the second wave of COVID-19 would impact Q1FY22 results to some extent.
- 4) It is advisable for investors to look out for stock specific opportunities. After strong run up in May and last few weeks; some profit booking was warranted and will make markets healthy. Investors will track global cues, ongoing monsoon, vaccination drive and economic activity and COVID-19 cases in Unlock phase for further direction.

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