

'Bharat Jodo Yatra': Rahul Gandhi to sleep in container for next 150 days

NEW DELHI(KCN): Congress leader Rahul Gandhi who embarks on 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' from Tamil Nadu's Kanyakumari today, will be staying in a container for the next 150 days. In what is being seen as 'masterstroke' of the Congress to take on the Narendra Modi government in the upcoming 2024 elections, the Congress launched the 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' on

change of places.

"About 60 such containers have been prepared and sent to Kanyakumari where a village has been set up in which all these containers have been placed. The container will be parked in a new place every day in the shape of a village for night rest. Full-time Yatris who stay with Rahul Gandhi will eat together and stay



Wednesday in which Rahul Gandhi will start the 3,570 km journey lasting about 150 days from Kanyakumari to Kashmir.

The party has made it clear that he will not stay in any hotel but rather will complete the entire journey in a simple manner. Rahul Gandhi is going to stay in the container for the next 150 days.

Sleeping beds, toilets and air-conditioners are also installed in some of the containers. Arrangements have been made keeping in view the intense heat and humidity with the

In Capital roadshow, Naveen connects with BJD workers after two years

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik was on Tuesday given a rousing welcome upon his return from New Delhi where he received the lifetime achievement award from the Capital Foundation Society. Much as it appeared like a reception, this was for the first time in last two years - disrupted by the Covid pandemic - he was directly re-connecting with the party workers.

It was a carefully planned strategy to tap the workers at the grassroots with general elections two years away. Party insiders said, the



BJD wanted to celebrate the party boss' 25 years in politics in a grand manner and used the opportunity in which every district unit was tapped.

More than 50,000 party workers from all corners of the State gathered outside the Biju Patnaik International airport to give a grand welcome to the Chief Minister. The atmosphere was festive with cultural groups, folk artistes, tribal dance troupes and conch shell blowers performing to welcome him.

The entire stretch was lined with peoplecheering him on both sides of the road. He gave a brief speech to the party workers from the vehicle which he had used in 2019 elections. Falling back on his famous tagline during his campaign in the 2019 general elections, the CM asked them, "Apana Mane

close," said the sources.

The sources further said that Rahul Gandhi considers the Bharat Jodo Yatra journey as a way to connect with the common people.

"So he wants to complete this entire journey in a simple way away from the glitz and glamour. Rahul Gandhi calls it a journey but political analysts consider it a preparation for 2024," the sources added.

The yatra will proceed mainly through 12 states, including Himachal Pradesh, where Assembly polls are due later this year.

Khusi Ta. Mu bi Bahut Khusi" (Are you happy. I am also happy).

"This was an occasion to celebrate the supreme leader of the party and his achievements so that a political message is sent to the BJD supporter at the last mile. All other occasions in the past two years have been on some governance platform or the other. Today's was a completely political programme," said a leader in the know of things.

All ministers, senior leaders, MPs and MLAs were in attendance as Naveen started his roadshow from the airport to Naveen Nivas in his luxury bus. The air reverberated with 'Naveen Patnaik Zindabad' chants as he came out of the airport. The show of strength by the BJD also came on a day

when the BJP Odisha in-charge Sunil Bansal was closeted with party leaders here to discuss strategy for the next polls.

Looking at how well-oiled a poll machinery BJD is, Naveen had revamped the senior observers list last month. Besides, he had also reconstituted the frontal organisations of the party. He will reconvene a meeting of the MLAs in a week to take stock of their poll preparedness, sources said.

The Chief Minister thanked the workers for their presence at the meeting place braving the rain. He dedicated the award to 4.5 crore people of Odisha and asked the party workers to do good work.

He also expressed his gratitude to the people of Odisha for the grand welcome and thanked them for giving him the opportunity to serve the State for 22 years.

Head of Hong Kong journalist union arrested

The head of Hong Kong's journalist union was arrested on Wednesday, just weeks before he was set to leave the city and begin an overseas fellowship.

Ronson Chan, chairman of the Hong Kong Journalists Association (HKJA), was arrested for allegedly obstructing a police officer and disorderly conduct in a public place.

Channel C, the online news outlet Chan works for, said the veteran reporter was taken away by police officers who asked to check his identity while he was reporting on a meeting of public housing flat owners.

Police said a 41-year-old man surnamed Chan was arrested after he refused to show officers his ID card and behaved in an "uncooperative" way despite multiple warnings.

Chan was set to leave Hong Kong at the end of September for the six-month Reuters Institute fellowship programme at Oxford Uni-

versity.

Authorities have used a national security law and colonial-era sedition charges to crack



down on dissent in Hong Kong after democracy protests three years ago.

Local media deemed critical of the government have faced a surge of police investigations and the city has plummeted down global press freedom rankings.

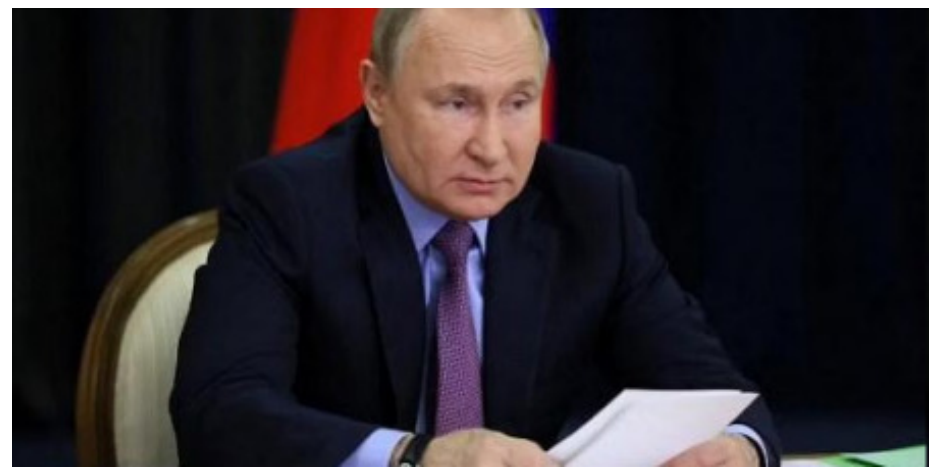
Like many now-shuttered civil society groups and pro-democracy unions, both Chan and the HKJA have faced repeated criticism from media outlets that answer to Beijing's Liaison Office in the city. CONTINUED ON: P-7

Vladimir Putin says Ukraine grain going to EU, not developing nations

MOSCOW(KCN): Russian President leaving Ukrainian ports after a blockade

developing nations.

the poorest developing countries, but to EU countries," Putin told the Eastern Economic Forum in Russia's Pacific port city of Vladivostok. Ukraine, one of the world's largest grain exporters, was forced to halt almost all deliveries after Russia started a military operation in late February.



Vladimir Putin said on Wednesday that most of the grain

that fuelled a global food crisis is reaching the EU instead of

"Almost all the grain exported from Ukraine is sent not to

ALSO READ | Russia Ukraine grain blockade is 'real war' CONTINUED ON: P-7

No plans to merge NEET, JEE with CUET for next two years: Union Minister Pradhan

KOTA(KCN): There are no plans to merge the engineering entrance exam JEE and medical entrance exam NEET with the Common University Entrance Test (CUET), Union Minister of Education, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Dharmendra Pradhan said.

University Grants Commission Chairman Jagadesh Kumar had last month said in the future JEE and NEET will be merged with the CUET.

"Merger of NEET, JEE and CUET is currently a concept, a thought and the government has not yet decided upon it in principle," Pradhan said while interacting with students, mostly hailing from his home state Odisha, of Allen Career Institute here during his one day visit to the city.

There is no proposal of merging NEET, JEE with CUET and it will take at least two

years to decide upon the concept of a merger of the three exams and to conduct a combined test, Pradhan said while asking the students not to be afraid.

On the increasing content in books from class 9 onwards so that students do not have to consult other books for competitive exams preparation, Pradhan said the new books under the New Education Policy-2020, would

come out in the next two years. 'Exams, results major cause of anxiety among school students': NCERT survey Implementation of NEP-2020 has started and books for the five-year foundation course called Bal Vatika (kindergarten) will be in schools by February 2023.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Union government has envisioned setting up a digital university in the country wherein students can pursue multi-disci-



plinary courses for dual degrees, the minister said. Meanwhile, the minister asked the students to give their suggestions on the content of the books and study material for the National Curriculum Framework Citizen Survey and assured them that their ideas would be considered.

Tens of thousands of students from across the country get enrolled in several coaching institutes of Kota for preparation for various exams every year.

Happy teacher's day Maa

DWIT DAVID PHILIP

You are my first teacher,
Taught me to touch, hold and suck the stream
devine, matchless, unknown you had,
Without it, I would have died.

Taught me to sleep, croll, stand and walk,
Without it, I would have fallen for ever the
compititors of world desire.

Taught me the alphabet of life not just of kg
class,
Without it, I would have never known, how to
face the world.

You are the one who believed and recognised
me and gave a boosom first,
After that I have met many but never found the
joy the lap you have that.

You are a teacher, who built my confidence,
inspite of many mistakes and flaws still I have,
Without it, I the infant, would have died in the
same day you have bleed.

Thank you, is a small word,
For you being my maa, Gratitude to God.
Happy teacher's day, maa....

Chaibasha, Jharkhand, India

Rebirth or Recurrence of Nature!

Subhanarayan Satapathy

Listened sound of birds and animals
Seen the fresh & fair water in the lake and river
Air became clean and pure
Was it the rebirth of nature?

It was happened after COVID lock down comes
People were staying inside their houses
All hotel, industry and transports closed
Ultimately rising smoke and dust stopped

When pollution was at extreme end
When population were over distinguished
When we injured the nature
So the virus appeared?

So it's common, questions in mind
Was it rebirth of nature in world?
Has it occurred after every saturation?
And recurrence at every completion?

We are going to recovered from the situation
It was the opportunity that we learn
Important and serious for us nature's protection
Failing may diminish the existence of human.

Bijipur, Brahmagiri, Puri

'Rosy verses'

Sanjib Kumar Dash

Born with thorns around,
dwindle in a little time span,
often, a subject of envied blemish,
Still, smiling ever till my dry petals
mingle with dust.

Why to lose heart for this short
journey,all aware,
pride overshadows my panic,
when glitters in deity's feet,
at glamorous Queen's crown,
my fragrance allures a lot,
immense pleasure,within,
elegance turn poetic eyes
to beauty's big volumes,
Bees' classic tunes' ecstacy
around me is exclusive.

Low price doesn't matter,
me,being a small creation,
Yet, valued as the precious
exchange gift between beloveds,
takes me to heaven of elated joy,
my cherished destination.

Reader in Physics, Deogarh College

Quotation of the Day

The struggle you're in
today is developing
the strength you need
tomorrow.



Robert Tew



Odisha Culture : 10 Things That You Must Know!

The stunning architectures, history, dialects, vibrant art music and dance forms make Odisha ever sprightly state of India. Odisha (formerly known as Orissa), the



battleground for the famous Kalinga war fought by Ashoka the Great, lies on the country's east coast. When the sun rises here, it rises over a land of temples thriving on top of a solid foundation laid by heritage. Life is uncomplicated, laid back and it doesn't take much to find some hush and quiet here. As opposed to the hustle and bustle of metropolitan concrete jungles, Odisha comes as a sigh of relief to the one seeking the peace of mind. Be it the temples of the capital city Bhubaneswar, the Buddhist Shanti Stupa of Dhaulagiri Hills or exotic birds that can be spotted at Asia's largest brackish water lagoon Chilika Lake, Odisha is worth paying a visit!

1. Architecture

The finesse and grandeur of Odisha's architecture is exhibited in its temples that the Aryans left behind. Some of them are among the finest in the country. Of these, the most important are the Lingaraja Temple, Bhubaneswar (11th century), Jagannath Temple at Puri (12th century) and the great Sun Temple at Konark (13th century). And hence, the golden triangle of Odisha - Bhubaneswar, Konark and Puri contributes the maximum amount of tourism goodwill. They are primary temples built in the style of 'Kalinga' architecture.

Lingaraja Temple

The largest of all temples that the Temple City of Bhubaneswar boasts of, it is one of the major tourist attractions of the state with over 6000 visitors on a daily basis. Here, Lord Shiva is worshipped as Harihara, a combined form of Vishnu and Shiva.



Jagannath Temple

The coastal town of Puri enshrines Lord Jagannath in this colossal temple. It is one of the Char Dham pilgrimages that one is expected to cover at least once in his lifetime. The temple is world-famous for its annual chariot festival or Rath Yatra.

Sun Temple

Designed in the silhouette of a gigantic chariot along with seven horses and twenty-four wheels, this entire temple was conceived as a chariot of the Sun God. It reflects the remarkable genius of architects that envisioned and went through with it. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, the preci-



sion and intricacy of its sculptural work is worth seeing.

2. Arts Culture of Odisha

It is impossible to list every form of visual art and craft this uber-talented state boasts of but here are some of the best-known ones:

Pattachitra (Cloth Painting)

Literally, 'Patta' translates to cloth and 'Chitra' means picture. The themes and mo-

tifs are mythological, typically revolving around the Jagannath and Vaishnava sect. Lord Jagannath and Radha-Krishna paintings are a rage among buyers. Pattachitra showing Ganesha and Shiva. Since it is a traditional art-form, the Chitrakara's (painter) very home is his own studio where his family members act as helping hands. The final painting is rendered in the form of a design on a canvas with decorative borders. Sometimes, palm-leaves are also used to form the canvas.

Rock Paintings

Rock art in Odisha dates back to the pre-historic period according to the earliest reports found at Viramkhol in Jharsuguda district. With the reign of Ashoka the great, Buddhist sculptural art gradually changed the degree of Odisha's artistic flair. Even today, the caves of Ratnagiri, Lalitgiri and Udaygiri have not faltered to showcase the wonderful legacy of sculptural brilliance that some of our finest carvers left behind.

odisha culture, culture of odisha

Buddhist rock carvings at Ratnagiri (Source)

Sand Art

With clean, fine-grained sand and water as its raw ma-

This is a famous fabric craft originating from a village called Pipili where locals call it 'Pipili Chandua Kama'. Unknown to many, Pipili holds an entry in the Limca Book of Records for the world's largest thematic applique work.

odisha culture, culture of odisha

Traditional Pipli appliqued umbrellas (Source)

Like Pattachitra, applique work also originated as temple art, essentially limited to umbrellas and canopies to be used in the annual Rath Yatra. Nowadays, its usage is more in the household, decorative and festival products. The craft involves embroidery and stitching with occasional mirror work.

Brass and Dhokra Works

A 4000-year old craft form, Dhokra is a casting method that combines metallurgical skills with wax techniques. It is a bell metal tribal craft that uses an alloy of tin and copper or brass and zinc. Various utility items including utensils, pots and pans, lamps and even tribal jewellery are fashioned out of it.

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3. Music

Remember Sona Mohapatra's Coke Studio track Rangabati? A remake of one of the most popular songs the state has ever pro-



duced!

Odisha is predominantly a land of tribes and each tribe has its distinct song and style of dance. Anyone delving into the vast pool of elements that define Odisha's culture must definitely take into account the Odissi music which forms a whole branch of Indian classical music. Even before the development of Odia as a language, Odissi songs had been written. Notable Odia poet Jayadeva was the first to have composed lyrics to be sung and this gave shape to Odissi music. Very different from the ragas of Hindustani and Carnatic music, Odissi ragas are sung in druta tala (fast beats). The classical dance of Odissi is performed with this form of music.

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Sand art by legendary sand artist Sudarshan Patnaik

Silver Filigree

Locally known as 'Tarakasi', this art form is about 500 years old. It hails from Cuttack, a.k.a the Silver City of Odisha (now you know why). The process consists of drawing silver through a series of consecutively smaller holes to produce fine strands of wire. Usually, Tarakasi jewellery is used to embellish Durga idols during Durga Puja in Cuttack and by Odissi dancers.

Applique Work

odisha culture, culture of odisha

An Odissi music orchestra at a music fest Source

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Shooting for third season of 'Four More Shots Please' to begin soon: Kirti Kulhari

MUMBAI(KCN): Bollywood actor Kirti Kulhari on Thursday said shoot for her series "Four More Shots Please!" is set to commence in coming days. The Amazon Prime

Taking to Instagram, Kulhari shared her excitement to team up with her co-actors again for the new season. "And we are back #fourmoreshotsplease #season3 shoot begins

tions, the show was recently nominated in the best comedy series category at the 48th International Emmy Awards. On the film front, Kulhari is currently awaiting the release



Video series, which also features Sayani Gupta, Maanvi Gupta, Gagroo and Bani J, follows a quartet of friends who deal with their relationships, work-life conflicts, ambitions and anxieties in a male-dominated society.

super soon. Lovely to be back with the crazy 3," Kulhari wrote alongside a series of candid photos with Gupta, Gagroo and Bani. Created by Rangita Pritish Nandy and produced by Pritish Nandy Communica-

of the Hindi remake of Hollywood blockbuster "The Girl on the Train", starring Parineeti Chopra. The movie, which premiere on streamer Netflix on February 26, will feature Kulhari as a British cop.

Maara Movie Review: A grounded remake of Charlie with quite a bit of heart

If you didn't know that Maara is the remake of the Malayalam film, Charlie, the opening shot of fireflies fluttering about is a strong hint of the magic contained within the universe of this film. Shortly, you see little Paaru in a nun narrates to her the story of a soldier who's travelling across seas and jungles in a quest to find his soul. This is pretty much the story of this film as well, as Paaru (Shraddha Srinath) grows up to find herself in a similar quest for her soul, well, soulmate, in Maara (Madhavan). There's another quest for a soulmate in this film, one undertaken by Vellaiyan (a wonderful Mouli), one that is later taken over by Maara. The film is a reinforcement of the power of stories, of the stories each of our lives are. This is why there are multiple characters with their own short stories, including those of Selvi (Abhirami), the sex worker, and Kani (Sshivada), the guilt-ridden doctor. The implication is that no one story is necessarily more important than another. I got the sense that Maara doesn't think of himself as a hero or a saviour, even if those around him seem to believe that. He's merely a tool, a person who breezes through life hoping to repay the extraordinary help that Vellaiyan has done to him. I loved this touch because shorn of it, Maara, the character, could have felt idealistic

and unrelatable—which would have gone against the point of the film itself. This way, there's a reason for why Maara is the way he is, why he can't afford to stay at one place for too long. I quite enjoyed that Madhavan plays this

designer kites, in the sketchbook and its pencil illustrations, in the sculptures... hell, even in the blotches of Maara's acid-wash hoodies. There's a call through this film, through its characters, to refuse to fall into the trap of mundanity and indifference, into routine and repetition. Maara is pretty much the film equivalent of 'Follow the white rabbit'. That's perhaps why during a conversation between Maara and a thief (Alexander Babu), you can see a neon sign in the background that reads 'White Rabbit'. The usual response to such a call is to cite a lack of financial security, and while that is a reason to be empathetic about—especially given the enviably cushy work-free existence Paaru seems to be leading in this film—we could also note how Maara, who's hardly a wealthy man (as a thief realises), makes the choice to get by, winning and returning favours in

Vijay Sethupathi, Katrina Kaif in Sriram Raghavan's next?

It was recently revealed that Sriram Raghavan's upcoming film, Ekkis, has been put on hold. A big-budget military drama starring Varun

Santosh Sivan, is a Hindi remake of Maanagaram (2017). He is also rumoured to star in an upcoming web series directed by Raj and

Sriram Raghavan's last film was Andhadhun (2018) with Ayushmann Khurrana and Tabu. The film is getting a Tamil and Telugu re-



Dhawan, the film was delayed due to Covid-19.

DK. The unrevealed series will also star Shahid Kapoor.

make with Prashanth and Nithiin, respectively, in the lead.

Banita Sandhu clarifies on COVID-19 diagnosis, says she 'continues to test negative'

Now, rumour has it that Sriram has signed Katrina Kaif and Vijay Sethupathi for his next. If true, this is the latest Hindi project Vijay Sethupathi is attached to — the others being Laal Singh Chadha and Mumbaikar. The latter, directed by

MUMBAI(KCN): "October" actor Banita Sandhu on Thursday said she has continued to test negative for COVID-19 since her arrival to the country in January 3, contrary to what is being reported in media.

According to health department sources, Sandhu had tested positive for COVID-19 on January 4 in Kolkata after flying from United Kingdom and was admitted to a private hospital after she refused to be treated in a government facility.



his small community. Maara, the film, suggests that perhaps, just perhaps, his way of life could also come down to the courage to choose to step away from the norm. Realise the magic of life in you, it seems to be saying... notice the al-

says, "destiny". Another likens him to a mythical character, Santa Claus, while commenting on Maara's habit of sudden appearances that usually result in joy to whoever he meets. Maara himself, as he does many times in this film, underplays

wide in surprise, and almost well up under the weight of decades of mourning. Ghibran's background music and Thamarai's evocative lyrics add so much to such scenes as well. It's wonderful that films like Maara are able to offer elderly characters like Mouli's as much purpose and are able to see them for the individuals that they are, instead of simply as a crutch for a lead character. Of course, much of this credit must go to the original film, Charlie. In a world that is in a tearing hurry, at a time when films and stories are designed to be rapid for fear of making audiences impatient, films like Maara come as a welcome relief. In this film, at least two important exchanges—between Vellaiya and Paaru, and later, between Maara and Kani—happen as wood slowly burns to ember, as tender faces are lit by the warm glow of a fireplace. It's for such moments that I'll remember this film, even if some inconsistent performances and some synthetic moments stop it from being truly great. Nevertheless, it's a film that has heart and that encourages empathy towards those around us, and if possible, to note that magicity doesn't need to be thought of an otherworldly trait, if only we cared to pay more attention to the beauty around us.

most mystical beauty of existence. It's also likely that this is why the film's many shots are lit as they are, with many faces often aglow, as though in the presence of a halo. This is why the coincidences in this film become palatable. The central idea at the heart of this film is of two lonely souls in search of each other. Take note of that inexplicable attraction little Paaru feels as she sees a speeding train from within her bus. Or take note of that instinctive smile from Maara as he steps into his room, a room that Paaru has lived in briefly. In such a film, coincidences are to be thought of as divine providence, or as one character, when speaking about Maara

this notion that he's a mystical being. It's his understanding—and you will see it from his eyes when he's engaged in conversation with every single character—that each of us is magical, as are our stories. In this film with performances that range from great to over-the-top, I loved Mouli in particular, who plays Vellaiya, an old man consumed by his unrequited love. Watch him in that scene with Paaru as he brings to her an old photo of his beloved, Meenakshi, but hesitates after seeing her be so charmed by photos of Maara instead. Watch him in another scene with Paaru as she tells him about Meenakshi; watch his eyes grow

Padyatra politics to opposition unity - Poll bugle before the battle

The Congress Party's padyatra is all set to evoke a political imbroglio well before the storm of the general elections 2024 begins. The foot march from Kanyakumari would go through states and Union

Territories and ultimately the tiresome revival exercise of the party would culminate in Kashmir with the padyatris (participants) putting their swollen foot on the 'Paradise on Earth'. The Congress leadership, having had the severest of shocks from the recent exodus of Gulam Nabi Azad and his henchmen from the party in his home state, has planned to have the last rites of the padyatra be performed in Jammu and Kashmir. The leaders of the party, at present, are presumably unclear about the achievable outcome that the yatra would conclude with. And the name that the yatra got to be known as, is more conflicting, than the modus operandi itself. "Bharat Jodo Yatra" would at least have irritated Sardar Patel, who is known to have stage-managed the incorporation of rebellious principalities into the spectrum of Indian nationality. India, under the most controversially famous nationalist government led by Prime Minister Modi, would take the nomenclature of the Congress revival foot march to be its rebellious adventurism loaded with insensitivity. The country at present does not need a clinical surgery for the incorporation of any slice of land into its mainstream administration. Except for the captured landscape by our blatant and envious neighbours China and Pakistan, we are intact with no stitching of unification required.

The present political scenario in India probably quells all hopes of recovery that

an aspirational Congress has been venturing about; giving its voters across the country which is roughly an estimated 20 percent, a sense of delusion on what the party is capable of except a foot march that the country's 'saint on earth' the Mahatma tried when India was under the colonial oppression. Instead of emboldening its cadre from the nuts and bolts, with adequate tightening and fixing, the party seems to have set out for a blinding exercise which is haphazardly engineered. Ambiguity that the party has been a master of and was capable articulating with all diligence and expertise in its previous ventures is once again thickly unfolding in its revival yatra too. With a large number of notable leaders deserting the party and the rest is brewing for unrest, the Gandhi family could successfully convince its devotees on a time taking and outdated event that it defines would expose the megalomania that the Congress frequently blames the Modi regime with. Social Media's fire fighting capabilities would expose the thick and thin of the padyatra. What could have been better for the party was to try methods of meaningful agitation against the government and a positive tutoring of the country's electorate on everything that it keeps accusing the regime of. Whatever, the primary knowledge that the Congress should have gained was to capture the depth of imprint and impact that the 'Modi initiatives' had on a large segment of the Indian voters. He could successfully cut across and carry out his welfare schemes to all levels of the society and the event management that the Congress is busy in should gain strength and courage and be genuinely appealing to a country that got 'Modified' since 2014. Opposition parties confined to state politics have realised the need of arresting a Modi juggernaut, a plan that they have

M. R. LALU

many-a-time silently cherished and now began to enact on, well before the 2024 national election. With no leader as popular and audacious as Modi in the opposition casket to counter his fiefdom, the parties that are trying to corroborate alliances stitching new equations would have to take Congress on board. But the Congress, with its traditional belligerence should at least have learnt a lesson by now to not make a reason to part with the rest. A galaxy of political parties with their paranoia has ideally learnt to secretly hide their face under an elusive cohesion and they would further envisage their individual prospects, in case their dream of dethroning the Modi regime gets articulated. Without a common face to plant against the independent India's most popular Prime Minister with his consistently huge popularity mandate, the collective efforts of the warring titans should trim size their ambitions for personal prospects into a certain level of affordability and mutual acceptance. With its decreasing charisma to lure the Indian voters, the Gandhi dynasty should come up with an open mind when the insiders of the party demand a democratic process electing a non-dynast. This definitely does not guarantee a complete revival of the Congress. But of course it can take a breath of relief by throwing its hat into the ring for a non-dynast. But Modi, on the other hand, has managed to convince the electorate of the country about his plans with genuine sensitivity and dream fulfilling examples such as the abrogation of Article 370 and many other initiatives with respect to the strengthening of India as a military and economic power. The most recent example is the procurement of the Rafale fighter jets and India's Atmanirbhar initiative, the INS Vikrant. Modi as a statesman - is a consistently

rooted iconoclastic belief. Aspiring to eradicate his image is impractical. Irrational attempts to tarnish his image have always bounced on the opposition. Irrespective of an opposition hotchpotch blowing the poll bugle together, what Modi could successfully build in the minds of a large section of India's electorate would remain untouched and unhampered. That is the depth into which he could engrave an essential feeling of being Indian with all that is nationalistic taking the centre stage. The Congress party's attempt to attack Modi would always be seen as cynical. Decades of its activities and ideological perspectives hold proof of its alacrity and cynical behaviour in detail, contradictory to its ideological oratory whenever the country's national interest was put to test. October 17 would be a red letter day for the Congress if the loudly proclaimed yet bound by technical glitch election for a full time President, probably one from outside the dynasty takes place. Rahul Gandhi's propensity to take politics as a part time vocation would deepen the crises of his party and the exodus that the Congress is habituated today would mount further. To bring him out of the cocoon of a sulky, reluctant leader, the Gandhi family ought to have thought of a padyatra. If it doesn't help him to improve his status and relevance as a leader, Modi will definitely have the last laugh when the Congress culminates its journey in Kashmir. Ousted from the states, once its bastions, and descending to a gloom nationally, the party needs to discover methods to reinvent its importance. But a padyatra seems to be a snail-space activity that the present political scenario in India can afford to wait for.

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India's - Unemployment crisis - biggest challenge

The aim of every sound economic system is to ensure the fullest utilisation of the nation's manpower and to provide at least the basic conditions of civilised existence to everyone. Forced unemployment involves not only serious economic loss but is also morally most demoralising and politically most dangerous because it undermines a person's self-confidence and throws him in to the arms of totalitarianism. In this country millions men annually enter the labour market aggravating the unemployment situation. Unemployment in India stood at 8.1% in February 2022, per centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) data. While this is an improvement from the near 12% unemployment during the peak of the 2nd covid-19 wave in may 2021, only 40% of Indians were employed or looking for work, compared to about 60% in other countries. Around 26% of Indian males between the age group of 20 and 30 years of education were not working while the figure is 2% for those aged about 30. Data also show that there are millions of jobs in India's informal Services and contract labour sector but less than 5% of the work force is formally skilled, Compared to 75% in Germany and 96% in South Korea. Further, India now has one of the lowest

female work force participation rates in the world, which has declined from about 35% in 2005 to 21% to-day, while the world average is 50%. Many jobs that returned with the post-Covid-19 economic recovery went back to male workers, while female workers continue to lose out. Jobs is our biggest public policy question, the biggest challenge for our country and also our biggest opportunity. Let us Correctly focused on. First we have very low labour force participation in India. The 40% no is low by international standards. Then, India has the lowest female labour force participation ratio among the top 20 economies, much lower than Bangladesh and even lower than Saudi Arabia, which is not a country that you would want to compare with for female employment prospects. Third the great buck of jobs in India's labour market are informal. In policy circles, a lot of time is spent focusing on policies needed for formal jobs, such as labour rights, etc. But formal jobs account for well under 15% of the total employment in the country; over 85% are informal jobs. Many persons prefer remaining unemployed and being a burden on their relatives to undertaking any work which involves loss of dignity and social esteem. There is yet little awareness in this country of the fact that providing employment is a social responsibility. Full employment is bound up with large-scale development. Economic

Uma Sankar Prasad

growth in the past was hindered by alien domination and the exploitation of the country's resources by the imperialists. Development was also made difficult by the domination of the economy by the privileged classes-by landlords and other feudal elements and by money-lenders, big business houses and corrupt officials. But today the situation is different. While everybody acknowledges that economic growth must be accompanied by social justice, very few people have a true understanding of what social justice demands. It means that concentration of economic power should be reduced and the gap between the maximum and minimum income should be narrowed. But it also means that all employed persons should make sacrifices to step up developmental on a scale which is commensurate with the requirements of full employment. Now, where's the opportunity, the promise? Around the world, economic history says that the biggest single driver of growth and prosperity for a country as it develops is the movement of people from lower productivity occupations. We have this opportunity still before us in India. We have 120 million people employed in agriculture, but we don't need that. Take the reverse migration of workers in the early days of the pandemic. They moved back because they had no choice, not because suddenly there were opportunities in their villages, but because at least they had a family there

that would support them when they were left with nothing. They had lost those informal jobs in cities. But by moving back to villages they actually subtracted from India's overall gross domestic product (GDP) growth because they would earn less, and that would show up as a minus. My estimate is that the reverse migration of 10 million workers subtracted about 0.5% from India's GDP. Those 10 million workers have still not returned to the cities. We have seen an increase in agricultural employment in these last two years, which is remarkable, unheard of, and not a good thing for a country like ours, because India now has over employment in relatively low productivity agriculture. We've added to that over employment because (migrant workers) had no other choice. All that is part of the struggle. All of this is an opportunity too, because the moment those 10 million workers come back to cities, you will see GDP growth pick up. People will become more affluent, spend more money, and these multiplier benefits will start getting the economy motoring in an effective way again. So the promise is this: If we can put millions of people to more productive work in good quality jobs, we have the potential to create an economic miracle that will sustain for 30 years, and it will sustain all of Indian industry and all of the world's industry.

The Author is Columnist, Khordha

India is on best phase of development : CG Zha Liyou

Kolkata (KCN): Merchants' Chamber of Commerce & Industry organised a Special Session on Managing India-China Trade on 1st September 2022 in Kolkata.

The special session was addressed by H.E. Zha Liyou, Consul General, Consulate General of People's Republic of China in Kolkata. President, MCCI Rishabh C. Kothari, his Welcome Note mentioned that In March, 2022 India has indicated a positive signal to 66 investment project worth \$1.79 billion from Chinese companies. India government has allowed Chinese firms to take access in the Indian power sector and even in the port sec-

tor. Shri Kothari lauded the business tie up China and West Bengal in Aerotropolis Project at Durgapur Airport in West Bengal.

In the context of domestic industry, Shri Kothari enquired what sort of a support is the Chinese government willing to give the Indian entrepreneur including in the MSME sector. Mr. Zha Liyou, Consul General, Consulate General of People's Republic of China in Kolkata in his address mentioned that India-China trade volume in 2021 has accounted for US\$125.6 billion which has witnessed 42.3% year on year growth. He further expressed his con-

cern that investment of China in India has dropped by 68%.

While speaking on bilateral trade between India and China, Mr. Liyou mentioned that India imports heavy mechinaries, electronic equipments, household products, laptops, computer, etc. He further mentioned that Chinese products have good quality. China was able to do trade worth Euro 586 billion and Chinese goods have qualified for EU standards.

Mr. Zha Liyou lauded that India is now best phase of development. He suggested that India should fully open to FDI. He also informed that according to forecast, India will overtake USA by 2043

and it is only possible when India would improve trade relation with neighboring countries.

Mr. Liyou advised to strengthening the complementary relationship including supply chain and industry chain.

He also focused on expanding sister relationship with the provinces in India. He believed the Sister relationship is preexisting. India-China would jointly create Asia Century. Mr. Zhang Hongjie, Economic and Commercial Consul also present .

The Session concluded with Vote of Thanks proposed by Mr. Namit Bajoria, Vice President, MCCI.

BJP government misusing NIA to target Muslim leaders, says Karnataka PFI

MANGALURU: A day after NIA implicated the Popular Front of India (PFI) for the murder of BJP worker Praveen Nettaru, the PFI Karnataka State Committee on Wednesday accused the BJP government of misusing the NIA in order to target the leaders of the organisation on the pretext of investigating the Praveen Nettaru murder case.

"There have been several murder incidents in the state recently, including the serial killings in Dakshina Kannada district. The BJP government has not

was due to local communal enmity. However, he alleged that Sangh Parivar activists were involved directly in the murder cases of Muslim youths in the state and accused the BJP government of following a biased approach.

Ashraf further alleged that there was a larger conspiracy behind handing over only the murder cases of BJP workers to NIA. "It is clear that they have misused NIA. A Muslim youth accused in the recent stabbing incident in Shivamoga also has been booked under UAPA, which is an example of how the BJP is misusing investigative agencies like the NIA," he said.

Ashraf termed the NIA raids on the houses and offices of the leaders of Muslim organisations as misuse of constitutional institutions and harmful to democracy. "The BJP government has been executing massive campaigns against its staunch ideological opponent - PDI - to cover up its administrative failures. But so far it has not been able to provide legal evidence against the constitutionally functioning PFI. We cannot be intimidated by such threats. The BJP government should immediately stop targetting Muslim leaders using NIA failing which the organisation will launch legal and democratic struggles across the state," he threatened.



given any significance to the investigation of the murders of Arbaaz from Belagavi, Sameer Shahapur, Masood of Sullia, Fazil of Suratkal. Just the murder of rowdy sheeter Harsha from Shivamoga and Praveen Nettaru is glorified," PFI state secretary AK Ashraf told reporters at a press meet here. He said the preliminary investigation conducted by the local police into Harsh's murder revealed that it was a fallout of a gang war while Praveen's murder

Ukrainian nuclear operator suggests UN peacekeepers in Zaporizhzhia

KYIV: Ukraine's nuclear operator on Wednesday said it would support the

watchdog called for a security zone around the plant. The Zaporizhzhia

been repeated attacks in its vicinity, sparking fears of a nuclear disaster.

zone at the ZNPP could be to set up a peacekeeping contingent there and

ALSO READ | Area around Ukraine nuclear plant hit again despite US pleas

The remark comes after the UN atomic watchdog (IAEA) said the situation at the plant was "untenable" and called for "the immediate establishment of a nuclear safety and security protection

zone" in a report published Tuesday.

Karine Herviou, the general director of the French Institute for Radiological Protection and Nuclear Safety, warned Wednesday of a potential "Fukushima-type scenario". "The main risk would be for the reactors to be cut from their power supplies"

which could cause parts of the reactors to melt, Herviou said in an interview for French radio.

This could then "damage the reactors' buildings and lead to very important radioactive releases," she said. Herviou added that, although there had been no strikes on the reactors them-

selves, strikes on nearby buildings could also "result in radioactive elements being released into the environment."

The IAEA sent a 14-person team led by its chief Rafael Grossi to the Zaporizhzhia power plant last week. Two members of the team are expected to remain there on a permanent basis to monitor the plant's safety.



deployment of UN peacekeepers in the Russian-occupied nuclear plant of Zaporizhzhia, a day after the UN atomic

power plant-- Europe's largest nuclear facility -- has been occupied by Russian troops since March and there have

Russia and Ukraine have blamed each other for the repeated shellings. "One of the ways to create a security

withdraw Russian troops," Energoatom chief Petro Kotyn said in remarks broadcast by Ukrainian TV.

Prabhu to head Co-op Policy drafting team

The Union Ministry of Cooperation has constituted a National Level Committee for



its first meeting and it is being said that the first meeting will be held before 15 September 2022. The office order in this regard was released on 2nd September 2022, of which a copy is with Indian Cooperative.

The 47-member committee has representatives from National Apex Cooperative Institutions, PACCs, Institute of Rural Management (IRMA), State Level Marketing Cooperatives, state RoCs, many academicians such as Dr. Sukhpal Singh, Professor, IIM Ahmedabad and others.

Some of the top co-operators in the Committee include NCUI President and IFFCO Chairman Dileep Sanghani, RBI Board member Satish Marathe, Nafsub President Jyotindra Mehta, Nafsub's D Krishan, GCMFM Managing Director RS Sodhi, Kribhco MD Rajan Choudhary, NAFSCOB President Ravindra Rao, Prakash Naiknavare, MD, National Federation of Co-operative Sugar Factories, Nafed Ex MD Sanjeev Chadha, among others.

According to the office order, the "National level Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri. Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu, comprising experts of the cooperative sector; representatives of National / State / District & Primary Cooperative Societies; Secretaries (Co-

operation) & Registrars of Cooperative Societies of States / UTs; and Officers from Central Ministries / Departments, is hereby constituted to draft the new National Cooperation Policy Document.

The Ministry of Cooperation will be represented by an Additional Secretary (Cooperation). The Committee shall be responsible for drafting the new National Cooperation Policy Document in line with the co-operative principles to provide an enabling framework to realise the vision of 'Sahakar se Samridhhi', strengthen the cooperative movement in the country and promote a cooperative-based economic development model", it reads.



The order further says, "VAMNICOM, Pune shall render necessary secretarial assistance, logistical and technical support to the Committee.

Commenting on this, cooperators said, "The new Cooperative Policy should ensure that there is no conflict due to the dual controls and should be in tune with tremendous developments in technology, business structures, social changes and others". It is to be noted that the existing National Policy on Cooperatives was brought in March 2002 by the then NDA government. Committee for drafting the New National Cooperation Policy Document:

Our tricolour under attack by BJP, RSS who are dividing country: Rahul at 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' launch



KANYAKUMARI(KCN): Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday said the tricolour belongs to every religion, state and language, but it is under attack today by the BJP and the RSS that are dividing India on lines of religion and language.

Speaking at the launch of the 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' at a rally here, he said every single institution of the country is under attack as he sought the support of people to help keep the

country united.

"Our tricolour guarantees the right to practice any religion of choice, but today this flag is under attack," Gandhi said at the rally. He said the tricolour did not come easily as it was earned by Indians of every religion, region and language. He also alleged that India is facing its worst-ever economic crisis along with the highest unemployment rate ever and the country is headed towards disaster.

RCWA Manipur & Nagaland Sector, CRPF Felicitates Ms Linthoi Chanambam who claimed a historic gold at the World Cadet Judo Championship in Sarajevo



Imphal (KCN): RCWA GC CRPF Imphal honored and gave a warm reception to Ms Linthoi Chanambam who claimed a historic gold at the World Cadet Judo Championship in Sarajevo, becoming the first from the country to win a medal in the tournament across any age-group. The children of KV GC CRPF

Langjing, Imphal were highly motivated by the talk given by her on never giving up approach and keeping a nice balance between her practice and studies. Mrs Rajni Datta, President M&N Sector CWA called upon the children to be like shining stars and keep high goals for the betterment of the future of our country.

PIB Kolkata introduces 'Azadi Quest': Series of online educational games based on India's freedom struggle

Kolkata (KCN): On the occasion of the ongoing nation-wide 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebrations, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt of India recently launched two unique mobile games 'AZADI QUEST: MATCH 3

PUZZLE' and 'AZADI QUEST: HEROES OF BHARAT'. The games were introduced to Kolkata media today (September 7, 2022) by Press Information Bureau (PIB), Kolkata. Shri Bhupendra Kainthola, DG (East Zone) PIB said, the games are in alignment with the Union Government's efforts to acknowledge the contributions of our freedom fighters and unsung heroes in attaining independence. It may be recalled that on June 24, 2021, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi while interacting with the participants of the Toycathon 2021 said "Many milestones, stories of our freedom fighters, their valour and leadership can be created into gaming concepts. There is a need to create interesting and interactive games that 'engage, entertain and educate'."



The information in these apps, in English and Hindi, has been curated by the Publications Division (Ministry of Information and Broadcasting) and Indian Council of Historical Research and is an easily accessible treasure-trove of authentic information on the freedom struggle. The first two games in the series 'Azadi Quest' tell the story of India's freedom struggle, highlighting key milestones and heroes, interwoven with fun game play. These online educational mobile games have been developed in collaboration with Zynga India. 'Azadi Quest: Match 3 Puzzle', is a simple and easy

in history, compete on leaderboards, and share in-game rewards and progress on social media. On the other hand, 'Azadi Quest: Heroes of Bharat' is designed as a quiz game to test the knowledge of the players about the heroes of India's independence through 750 questions spread across 75 levels and also tell them about the lesser known heroes through 75 'Azadi Veer' cards which may be shared across social media platforms. The games will also provide the players with exciting rewards every month including a certificate to those who complete the 'Azadi Quest'. The games can be downloaded in both IOS and Android devices. For the IOS devices, the link is- <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/azadi-quest-match-3-puzzle/id1633367594> and for the android ones, the link is, <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.zynga.missionazaadi>. For heroes of Bharat, one has to download <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/heroes-of-bharat/id1634605427> for IOS devices and <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.zynga.heroes.of.bharat> for Android devices. PIB Kolkata senior officials Ms Jane Namchu, Additional Director General, Shri Partha Ghosh, Joint Director, PIB Kolkata and Shri Snehasis Sur, President of Press Club, Kolkata were also present on the occasion.

Road blockade in Barbil to protest pollution rise in the area



Barbil(KCN): People living in villages along Bhadrasahi to Nalda road in Keonjhar district are sore over routine traffic jam caused by thousands of mineral-laden trucks. Thousands of such trucks, dumpers, trailers, buses, vans, auto-rickshaws and bikes were stranded for hours Wednesday . It is too seen pointed out unpleasant situations spring up at different places due to stranded vehicles. Some pointed out that traffic jams have become routine on this route, giving nightmares to locals and commuters. They have long been demanding an effective means to ward off traffic congestion on roads, but to no avail. Many companies like Jagannath Steel, Arcelor Mittal and Balaji steel are lacking enough parking space of their own and the lorries do the transportation in these use one lane of road as their parking one local comments.

Local administration are not able to restrict this unauthorised parking because of various unseen reason. Due to lack of strict follow up of the pollution control guide line ,the pollution rises and the local habitant get suffered. They complain that the dust generated by the traffic leaves a layer on their drinking water and cooked food as well. .Reeling under acute pollution, inhabitants of Pal hutting under Barbil municipality on Tuesday resorted to road blockade demanding regular water spraying and for doing a permanent solution to the problem. People alleged that the state government was earning crores of rupees from the mining sector, but the long awaited bye pass and ring road construction is under carpeted in Government office which leading to suffering of people.




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Roys says Adani needs IT approval for the conversion of warrants into stake in NDTV

NEW DELHI: After reaching out to the market regulator SEBI for clarification

quires approval from the Income Tax authorities for exercising their right to con-

owns 29.18% equity interests in NDTV, has intimated VCPL on August 31, 2022

completion of reassessment proceedings," said NDTV in a regulatory filing

Income Tax authorities in relation to the public announcement of August 23, 2022 by VCPL. RRPRH has invited VCPL to join them in their application before the Income Tax authorities.

ALSO READ | From Ambani to Adani: The NDTV saga

According to NDTV's regulatory filing, "The Income Tax Department attachment order of 2017 (read with order of 2018) pertains inter alia to the loan agreement with VCPL in 2009, and is premised on RRPRH (allegedly) transferring its controlling interest in NDTV to VCPL for Rs.403.85 crore, culminating in an estimate of Rs.175 crore "tax on capital

gains arising on sale of controlling interest in NDTV to VCPL" on RRPRH. "With the Securities Appellate Tribunal concluding, in its order of July 20, 2022 that the intent and language of the loan agreement and call option agreements read with the SAST Regulations makes it clear that there is no direct or indirect control of NDTV by VCPL. The transaction structure does not lead to a conclusion that VCPL has acquired direct or indirect control over NDTV, the Income Tax Authorities will be required to clarify whether in light of the SAT order, the provisional attachment will continue to operate on RRPRH equity

shares held in NDTV," the regulatory filing read. Further, RRPRH has intimated VCPL that as individuals, Radhika and Pranjoy Roy, may individually require independent approval, under section 281 of the Income Tax Act, from the Income Tax Authorities, to deal with any assets, including indirect shareholding in NDTV, arising from sub judice (impugned) orders. ALSO READ | Adani's possible NDTV takeover: How Rs 403-crore loan landed Roys in trouble The Adani Group on August 23 announced it is indirectly acquiring a 29% stake in NDTV and had asked the

holding firm -- RRPR -- to transfer by August 25 all its equity shares to VCPL. VCPL, which was acquired by the Adanis for Rs 114 crore, owns warrants in RRPR and a conversion of warrants into equity will result in VCPL acquiring control of RRPR, which holds 29.18% stake in NDTV. The Roys, however, have raised technicalities in the SEBI order of 2020 that for two years, until November 26, had barred NDTV's founder-promoters from dealing in their shares directly or indirectly. The two parties on August 29 reached to SEBI for clarification on this.



tion regarding a 2020 order, NDTV founders Radhika and Pranjoy Roy have now said that the Adani Group own need Vishvapradhan Commercial Private Limited (VCPL) re-

vert the warrants that would result in the acquisition of a 29% stake in the media outlet. This comes as NDTV promoters continue to delay Adani Group's hostile takeover. "RRPRH, which

that equity shares of NDTV held by RRPRH were provisionally attached by the Income Tax authorities in the year 2017, with notification in 2018 that the attachment shall remain in place until

late Wednesday. RRPRH, the promoter holding vehicle, said that it has informed VCPL that operation of these order(s) of attachment will require approvals and/or clarifications from the

GST collection rises 28 per cent to Rs 1.43 lakh crore, festive season to drive mop-up

NEW DELHI: India's tax collection from the sale of goods and services soared 28 per cent to Rs 1.43 lakh crore in July aided by rising demand, higher rates, and greater compliance. The GST collection remained above the Rs 1.4-lakh-crore mark for the sixth

straight month in August and the ensuing festival season will help continue the trend. Better reporting coupled with economic recovery has have a "positive impact on the GST revenues on a consistent basis", the finance ministry said in a statement.

The gross GST revenue collected in August 2022 is Rs 1,43,612 crore of which CGST is Rs 24,710 crore, SGST is Rs 30,951 crore, IGST is Rs 77,782 crore (including Rs 42,067 crore collected on import of goods) and cess is Rs 10,168 crore (including Rs 1,018

crore collected on import of goods), the ministry said. The revenues for the month of August 2022 are 28 per cent higher than the GST revenues of Rs 1,12,020 crore collected in August 2021. "The growth in GST revenue till August 2022 over the same

period last year is 33 per cent, continuing to display very high buoyancy. This is a clear impact of various measures taken by the Council in the past to ensure better compliance," the Ministry said. The collection in August is, however, lower than Rs 1.49 lakh crore collected in July. The mop up was at a record high of Rs 1.67 lakh crore in April. KPMG in India Partner Indirect Tax Abhishek Jain said, "The consistent high

collections indicate upward economic trajectory despite fluctuating COVID cases and to some extent attributable to inflation and better compliance being ensured by the government. "N A Shah Associates, Partner, Indirect Tax, Parag Mehta said the collection increase is due to better compliance and the removal of various exemptions from July 2022. "Further, with the festive season setting in, the collec-

tions for the next 2-3 months will also show an upward trajectory," Mehta said. Deloitte India Partner MS Mani said the collections reflect the strength of the underlying economic factors. "With the onset of the festival season, which is typically a large consumption driver for all businesses, the GST collections in the coming months would also be expected to be robust," Mani added. Nextdigm, Director Indirect Tax, Sanjay Chhabria said higher collections are signs of recovery of trade & economy post the COVID-19 pandemic and we could continue to

witness such higher tax buoyancy during the upcoming festivities in the country. ICRA Chief Economist Aditi Nayar said looking ahead, the YoY growth in GST collections is likely to remain well above 20 per cent in September 2022, before tempering down to 12-15 per cent in December quarter, on a normalising base, trending close to the nominal GDP expansion. "We continue to foresee a considerable upside in the CGST collections relative to the FY2023 BE, more than offsetting the expected loss in excise collections," Nayar said.

Rupee falls 7 paise to 79.89 against US dollar

MUMBAI: The rupee declined by 7 paise to close at 79.89 (provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday tracking a strong dollar in overseas markets and losses in the domestic equities. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the domestic currency opened at 79.93 per dollar. It hovered in a range of 79.84 to 79.94 during the session.

bal markets. Dollar index surged to a fresh 20-year high and is currently trading around 110.45 levels. Recovery in crude oil prices from lower levels may also weigh on rupee," Choudhary said. USDINR spot price is expected to trade in a range of Rs 79 to Rs 80.50 in the next couple of sessions. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges



The domestic unit finally settled at 79.89, down 7 paise over its previous close of 79.82. Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas said that a strong dollar overseas hit the rupee sentiment. The US Dollar surged as economic data from the US surprised the markets. The US ISM services PMI unexpectedly rose to 56.9 in August from 56.7 in July. However, weak crude oil prices and foreign fund inflows cushioned the downside. "We expect Rupee to remain weak on strong US Dollar and weak cues from glo-

the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.16 per cent higher at 110.39. Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, advanced by 0.54 per cent to USD 93.33 per barrel. On the domestic equity market front, the BSE Sensex ended 168.08 points or 0.28 per cent lower at 59,028.91, while the broader NSE Nifty declined 31.20 points or 0.18 per cent to 17,624.40. Foreign institutional investors were net buyers in the capital market on Tuesday as they purchased shares worth Rs 1,144.53 crore, according to the exchange data.

Fuel demand in August: Petrol sales rebound, diesel shows decline NEW DELHI: Petrol sales in India rebounded iAugust but diesel continued to show a decline over the previous month as rains in several parts chipped away demand in some sectors, preliminary industry data showed. Petrol sales, which had dipped 5 per cent in July, increased 5.8 per cent to 2.81 million tonnes in August when compared with 2.66 million tonnes of demand in the previous month. The consumption was almost 16 per cent higher than August 2021 and 31.7 per cent more than 2.14 million tonnes in the same month in 2020. It was 20.6 per cent higher than the pre-pandemic demand of 2.33 million tonnes in August 2019. Diesel, the most widely used fuel in the country, saw consumption drop 4.9 per cent to 6.11 million tonnes from 6.42 million tonnes in July.

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Vladimir Putin says Ukraine grain going to EU, not developing nations

Continued from page-1 crime', says EU foreign policy chief Exports of grain across Black Sea ports resumed after Kyiv and Moscow in July inked a deal with the United Nations and Turkey acting as guarantors. "We did everything to ensure that Ukrainian grain was exported... we did it together with Turkey," Putin said at the forum. Putin said European countries "acted as colonialists in recent decades and centuries" and "they continue to act so today". He said they "once again simply deceived developing countries". "With this approach, the scale of food problems in the world will only grow," Putin said, adding that it could lead to "an unprecedented humanitarian catastrophe".

Head of Hong Kong journalist union arrested

Continued from page-1 Police action has often followed such media coverage. Local tabloid Apple Daily and online news platform StandNews -- which Chan used to work for -- were forced to close last year after executives were charged with national security violations, leaving hundreds of journalists out of work. When Reporters Without Borders (RSF) released its annual press freedom ranking in May, Hong Kong had plunged 68 places to 148th in the world. In RSF's first report in 2002, Hong Kong had some of the freest media in Asia and ranked 18th worldwide. The Foreign Correspondents' Club of Hong Kong gave up Asia's largest annual human right press awards earlier this year, citing risks posed by the security law -- a decision that caused controversy among many journalist members. The club recently published a watered-down statement on press freedom on its website. One of the removed sentences from the statement read: "Facing unprecedented attacks on the media, never has our club's role been more vital -- nor our commitment been stronger."

Swiss Open: Sindhu clinches women's singles title

Basel: Ace Indian shuttler P V Sindhu clinched her second women's singles title of the season with a straight game win over Thailand's Busanan Ongbamrunphan but HS Prannoy went down fighting in the men's singles final at the Swiss Open Super 300 badminton tournament here on Sunday.

Sindhu registered her 16th win over Busanan in 17 meetings, having lost to the Thai only once -- at the 2019 Hong Kong Open, to claim the Super 300 crown, the second lowest tier of BWF Tour events. Sindhu had won the Syed Modi International Super 300 in Lucknow in January this year. Sindhu rode on her

ond game. Sindhu looked more aggressive as she troubled the Thai with her acute angle shots to dictate terms. In full flow, the Indian soon cruised to a decisive nine-point advantage at the interval. She kept a firm grip on the match to gallop to 18-4, riding on her alert front court play and precise returns. Busanan continued to hit wide and long

quickly erased the early 1-4 deficit and moved to 5-5 but Jonatan pulled away from 8-8 to take a three-point cushion at the breather. Prannoy was erratic while Jonatan looked rock solid in his defence as the Indonesian created a huge gap with a seven-point burst to grab seven game points. The Indian saved two before conceding the opening game.



the tournament, Sindhu, a double Olympic medallist, took 49 minutes to get the better of the fourth seeded Busanan 21-16 21-8 at the St. Jakobshalle here. However, Prannoy suffered a 12-21 18-21 defeat against Asian Games gold medallist and fourth seed Jonatan Christie of Indonesia in a 48-minute summit clash to finish runner-up. For Sindhu, it was a moment of glory as she finally lifted the trophy after losing to Rio Olympics gold medallist Carolina Marin of Spain in the final of last edition. The 26-year-old from Hyderabad has happy memories of this venue as she had also claimed the World Champion-

attack to open up a 3-0 lead but Busanan started to stay in the rallies and produced some good quality shots to make it 7-7. Busanan tried to keep Sindhu away from the net initially, making her move across the court but the Thai was erratic in her finishing, allowing the Indian to go into the break with a narrow two-point lead. Busanan used her deceptions and drop shots to dictate the rallies but Sindhu relied on her retrieval skills to stay ahead. A precise return at the backline gave Sindhu four game points and she sealed the first game when Busanan went wide. Busanan struggled with her length after the change of sides to concede a 0-5 lead early on in the sec-

to eventually hand over 16 match points to the Indian, who pocketed the game and the match comfortably. Prannoy, a former world number 8, finished a creditable second best after making his first final in the last five years. The 29-year-old from Thiruvananthapuram has been grappling with multiple health issues after being diagnosed with a gastroesophageal reflux disease in 2018 and COVID-19 infection in 2019. On Sunday, Prannoy couldn't match the accuracy and power of Jonatan, who looked in complete control of the final. The Indian looked competitive in the early part of the opening game as he

The second game was a close affair as the duo moved together till 7-7 before Jonatan again opened up a 11-7 lead at the interval. Prannoy was not able to sustain the pressure in the rallies, while Jonatan was composed and was rewarded more often for his cross court smashes and fine front-court play. The Indian did well to claw his way back to 13-13 but a reversal slice helped Jonatan break the run of points. The momentum shifted again as Jonatan led 19-14 with Prannoy committing a slew of errors. Another winner gave the Indonesian five championship point. Prannoy saved three before hitting the net.

Chelsea FC parts way with head coach Thomas Tuchel

LONDON: Chelsea Football Club on Wednesday announced that it has parted ways with head



coach Thomas Tuchel. "Chelsea Football Club has today parted company with Head Coach Thomas Tuchel. On behalf of everyone at Chelsea FC, the club would like to place on record its gratitude to Thomas and his staff for all their efforts during their time with the club. Thomas will rightly have a place in Chelsea's history after winning the Champions League, the Super Cup and Club World Cup during his time here," said the club in an official statement on its website.

"As the new ownership group reaches 100 days since taking over the Club, and as it continues its hard work to take the club forward, the new owners believe it is the right time to make this transition," added the club in its statement. Chelsea's coaching staff will take charge of the team for training and the preparation of our upcoming matches as the club moves swiftly to appoint a new head coach. There will be no further comment until a new head coach appointment is made. Tuchel joined the club back in January last year. He was the first-ever German to be appointed as the head coach of Chelsea and came to the club after guiding the Paris Saint-Germain Football Club, a French Club to four major titles and a Champions League final. During his time with Chelsea, he won the UEFA Champions League 2020-21, UEFA Super Cup 2021 and FIFA Club World Cup 2021. His side also finished as runner-up in the FA Cup in the 2020-21 and 2021-22 season. In the EFL Cup 2021-22 as well, his side finished as runner-up.

Mohammad Rizwan replaces Babar Azam as Men's No 1 T20I batter



HYDERABAD: Pakistan cricket team captain Babar Azam has been replaced as the top-ranked Men's T20I batter and it is his teammate Mohammad Rizwan who displaces him. Rizwan has been in red hot form in the ongoing Asia Cup, leading the runs chart with 192 runs in 3 matches. His scores of 78* and 71 against Hong Kong and India respectively have helped his team win back-to-back matches. Reacting to his elevation in the rankings,

Rizwan tweeted "Count this as 1156th day of the reign of Kaptaan @babarazam258. Kaptaan or me alag nahi hain. The King remains the King. Hum sab aik hain." (sic). Rizwan, in his tweet said that his captain Babar Azam and he were not different. He also thanked his fans and supporters in his tweet. Babar Azam held the top tank for 1155 days before Rizwan displaced him from the position in the ICC Rankings.

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