

veKLY NEWSWRAP

August 20, 2023 / 43



ECONOMY

Indian economy gathering momentum in Q2

Date: 17 August 2023



Indian economy is gathering momentum in the second quarter, though inflation would continue to average above the central bank's comfort zone of 6%, said an article in the RBI's monthly bulletin. The consumer price index (CPI) based retail inflation shot up significantly to 7.44% in July, from 4.87% in the preceding month, mainly due to soaring prices of tomato, vegetables and other food items. "While core inflation witnessed a moderation, headline inflation is expected to average well above 6% in the second quarter," it said.

Source: The Times of India

TRADE

India's exports are down but so is the trade deficit

Date: 14 August 2023

India's exports in the month of July declined 16% to \$32.25 billion while imports fell 17% to \$52.92 billion, government data showed. Exports have now contracted for the sixth month in a row due to the global headwinds, after contracting 22% in June, according to the government data. The trade deficit dipped 18.5% from \$25.4 billion in July 2022 to \$20.7 billion in July 2023. In June, the exports had fallen by 22% compared to the previous year, imports data showed a fall of 17.5%, year-over-year.



Source: CNBC TV 18

TELECOM

Bulk sale of sim cards banned; agents need police verification

Date: 17 August 2023



In a move to curb frauds using mobile phone sim cards, the government said that bulk sales of sim cards will be barred and mandated registration of franchisee, agents and distributors or point of sales by telecom companies besides police verification for sim dealers. Telecom minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said, "We hope that with these two reforms, cyber fraud and user protection will undergo a significant change." The department of telecommunications (DoT) will issue detailed guidelines for the same.

Source: Mint

BANKING

RBI launches 'UDGAM' web portal for unclaimed deposits

Date: 17 August 2023

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) launched a centralised web portal UDGAM (Unclaimed Deposits – Gateway to Access inforMation), to make it easier for the public to search for their unclaimed deposits across multiple banks in one place. The web portal will help users identify and approach their banks for either claiming unclaimed deposits or making their deposit accounts operative at their banks, the central bank said in a release.

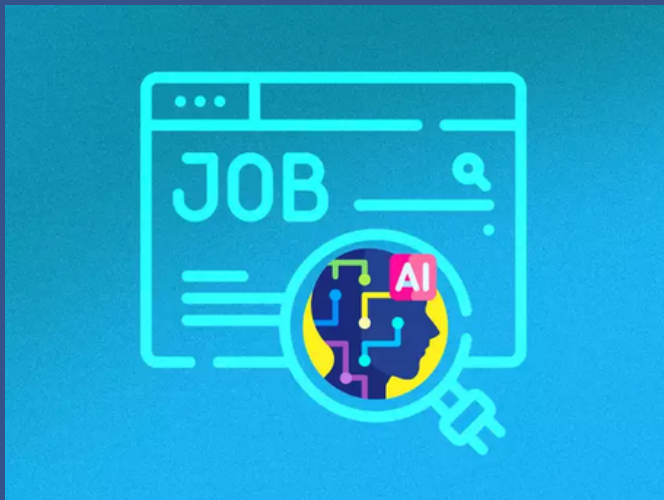


Source: Business Standard

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

AI to replace 5% full-time tech roles annually in 5 years

Date: 17 August 2023



Artificial Intelligence (AI) will replace up to 5% full-time technology roles annually over the next 4-5 years, said analysts. However, while basic jobs are replaced with AI based automation solutions, technology experts expect a higher level of jobs to be created that will involve less support roles and more decision-making and strategic roles. Roles in AI ethics and sustainability practices will also come in demand.

Source: The Economic Times

PETROLEUM

Govt eyes ethanol to meet its 5% biodiesel blending target

Date: 17 August 2023

The government is banking on ethanol to meet its target of blending 5% biodiesel in diesel sales by 2030, officials said. Widely used in Europe, biodiesel refers to biodegradable fuel traditionally manufactured from vegetable oils, animal fats, or recycled restaurant grease. But its adoption on a large-scale across the country hit multiple hurdles due to the limited availability of biodiesel feedstock. Despite launching an exercise to tune the existing national biodiesel policy with more incentives, no viable solutions were found, officials told Business Standard.

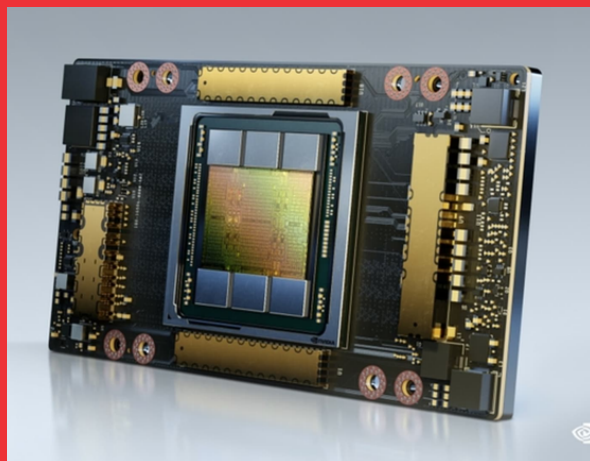


Source: Business Standard

News from International Publications

Saudi Arabia and UAE buy Nvidia chips to power AI drive

Date: 15 August 2023



Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are snapping up thousands of high performance Nvidia chips crucial for building artificial intelligence software, joining a global AI arms race that is choking the supply of Silicon Valley's hottest commodity. The Gulf powerhouses aim to be leaders in AI as they pursue ambitious plans to turbocharge their economies. According to people familiar with the moves, Saudi Arabia has purchased at-least 3,000 H100 chips — a \$40,000 processor described by as “the world’s first computer [chip] designed for generative AI.”

Source: Financial Times

With record youth joblessness, China stops reporting it

Date: 16 August 2023

China's soaring levels of youth unemployment have heightened fears the world's second-largest economy is heading for a crippling slowdown. Beijing has come up with a solution: It will stop releasing the numbers. The National Bureau of Statistics said it would stop publishing age group-specific unemployment data this month, after China's youth unemployment rate for 16- to 24-year-olds rose to a record high of 21.3% in June. Some experts believe that number is actually much higher.

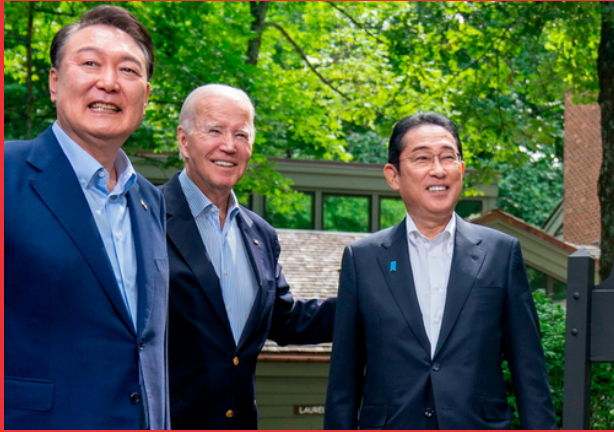


Source: The Washington Post

News from International Publications

US draws Japan and S Korea into defence pact

Date: 18 August 2023



The US, Japan and South Korea are to create a leader-level hotline and hold annual military exercises as part of an agreement that will help Washington and its Asian allies boost deterrence against North Korea and China. President Joe Biden will announce the move with Japanese prime minister Fumio Kishida and South Korean president Yoon Suk Yeol at Camp David, according to Kurt Campbell, the top White House official for the Indo-Pacific region.

Source: Financial Times

EU limits fines for carbon border tax breaches in trial phase

Date: 18 August 2023

Brussels will fine importers no more than €50 a tonne of carbon emissions for missing reporting requirements during the trial period of the world's first carbon border tax. The planned penalties, which could even be as low as €10 a tonne, were announced yesterday as part of legislation laying out how the EU's "carbon border adjustment mechanism" will work when it comes into effect for an 18-month trial from October 1.



Source: Financial Times