

National News

An initiative called 'Ashmita' has been launched under the leadership of the President of India Mrs. Murmu.

- **Army Wives Welfare Association (AWWA)** has organized the second initiative 'Ashmita - Inspirational Stories of Army Wives' at the **Grand Maneksha Center** in the national capital, **New Delhi**. President of India Murmu is the Chief Guest and head.
- This initiative has been launched with the aim of sharing the **inspiring heroic stories** of army wives who have carved a niche for themselves in various fields with perseverance and determination. It is designed with the aim of bringing the **tragic life of soldiers** before the eyes of the people.

International news

Bishowambhar Shrestha has been appointed as the new Chief Justice of Nepal.

- **Bishowambhar Prasad Shrestha** was appointed as the Next and New **Chief Justice of Nepal** by **President Ram Chandra Paudel** on **August 21**.
- A statement issued by the President's Office stated that **President Baudel** will be the next Chief Justice of Nepal, known as the **Himalayan Nation**, who will head the judiciary for **14 months**.
- Notably, Shrestha, who laid out his plans and visions to effectively lead the Supreme Court of the country, promised to work to eradicate the **influence of middlemen in court proceedings**.

India and ASEAN agree on a plan to review the FTA by 2025.

- **India** and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have decided to review their existing **free trade agreement** for goods and **set a target of 2025** to complete the review with the aim of addressing the "**Asymmetry**" in trade between the two sides, the central government's notification issued on **August 21** said.
- The **AITGA** data review will be further developed at the **India-ASEAN Leaders' Summit** scheduled for early **September** for guidance from the two countries at a recent meeting in **Indonesia**.

Saudi Arabia has launched an AI-powered project to fight desertification.

- In August 2023, **Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Environment** launched a plan to fight **desertification** across much of the country through artificial intelligence (AI).
- The project aims to contribute significantly to the development of the country by studying the status of vegetation cover in the **region and improving the objectives of afforestation programs**. It is also known as Saudi Arabia's "**Green Saudi**" initiative.

State news

The MP Chief Minister has launched the **Mukhyamantri Sikho-Jano Yojana**.

- **Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan** launched the **Mukhyamantri Seekho-Kamao yojna**, which means 'Chief Minister's Learning-Earning', on **August 22**.
- In the first phase, the state government has set a target of enrolling "**One Lakh Youth**" in the scheme and in the next phase, the scheme is designed with the aim of rolling out its improvements. The Chief Minister has announced that this scheme has been introduced especially for the youth between **18 to 29 years of age**.

Punjab Chief Minister has launched an app called '**Mera Bill**'.

- **Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann** on **August 21** launched a mobile app called '**Mera Bill**' under the flagship program '**Bill liao in naam pao**' (**Bring Bill, Get Rewarded**).
- The chief minister said that the app is designed to **increase compliance under GST and thereby improve the country's revenue**.
- The Chief Minister said that the scheme also ensures that consumers in the state get better access to bill lists from vendors for **purchases made within the state**.

Karnataka has announced the official cancellation of the new education policy.

- **The Karnataka state government on August 21** has officially announced that it will withdraw the **National Education Policy (NEP)** and issue a **New State Education Policy** from the next academic year.
- He said in the announcement that the policy was created without taking the states into confidence and education policy cannot be imposed on the states and a uniform policy is not possible in diverse and **pluralistic countries**. It is also significant that states like **Tamil Nadu** and **Kerala** have already rejected the **NEP policy**.

The Odisha State Government has approved various industrial development projects worth Rs.873 crore.

- **The Odisha government on August 21** approved nearly **nine industrial development projects** worth **Rs 873.57 crore** for various development projects in the state.
- The state government has said that through these schemes employment opportunities can be created for nearly **2,51,600 people**. Prominent among these projects are **Petronet LNG Limited's Compressed Fertilizer Plant and Biogas Plant Project**. It is significant that the project, with an annual capacity of **33,065 MT**, promises the twin benefits of **renewable energy and chemical production**.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister has launched a new accident insurance scheme for small and micro enterprises.

- **Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath** has launched a new accident insurance scheme for **small and micro entrepreneurs** in the state of **Uttar Pradesh** on **August 21**.
- Speaking at the program launch event held in the state capital, **Lucknow**, the state chief minister said that more than **90 lakh entrepreneurs** from the state with a turnover of less than **Rs.40 lakh and a capital** of less than **Rs.5 crore** will benefit under the scheme. It is significant that he has urged the entrepreneurs to register for this purpose on the **central government's entrepreneurship portal**.

G20 plans to hold the fourth Cultural Working Group (CWG) summit in Varanasi.

- **The G20 4th Cultural Working Group (CWG) meeting** is scheduled to begin on **August 23** in **Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh**. The conference starts on **August 23** and ends on **August 26**.
- It is significant that the theme of the conference is **"G20 Culture: Shaping the Global Story for Heritage Inclusive Development"**. The conference aims to **uphold the character, tradition and culture of the country**.

Appointments

Neelkanth Mishra has been appointed as part-time Chairman of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI).

- **Neelkanth Mishra, Head of Global Management at Axis Capital and Chief Economist at Axis Bank**, has been appointed as **Part-time Chairman** of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) in August 2023.
- He previously held leading positions with **Zurich, Switzerland-based Credit Suisse** and brings over two decades of experience in finance expertise to enhance the organization.

Jitendra Gohil appointed as Chief Investment Advisor for Kotak's business.

- **Kotak Alternate Asset Managers (KAAML)** has named economist **Jitendra Gohil** as its **Chief Investment Advisor** in its August 2023 announcement to enhance its advisory practice in institutional investment trading.
- **Jitendra** will be a key member of **KAAML's Investment Advisory Board** to balance the **company's financial crisis and improve the company** with his rich experience, the company said in the announcement.

Awards

THDC India has been conferred with the prestigious CSR Times Award.

- The company has been awarded the prestigious **"CSR Times Award"** in August 2023 for its unique contributions and outstanding achievements in focusing on the segment **'Water Conservation and Management'**.

- **R. K. Vishnoi, Chairman and Managing Director** of the company, received this prestigious award, the company said in its announcement. It is notable that the dinner was hosted at the conference held on **August 21** under the theme "**Achieving SDGs through CSR in Emerging Economies: The Role of G20 Countries**".

Shallu Jindal has been conferred with the prestigious CSR TIMES Lifetime Achievement Award for the year 2023.

- Renowned social activist and Chairman of JSP Foundation **Shallu Jindal** has won the prestigious **CSR TIMES Lifetime Achievement Award 2023** in August 2023.
- It is significant that this award has been presented to him in recognition of his outstanding and sustained positive contribution to the development of the most **economically backward** and **socially vulnerable communities**.

Economic news

India's foreign trade to cross \$800 billion by 2023 : GTRI report.

- Healthy growth of India's work and services sectors In the first half of 2023 (January-June), despite a slowdown in global demand, the aggregate value of India's total exports and imports of goods and services crossed **\$800 billion**, **GTRI** said in its report on **August 21, 2023**.
- Exports of goods and services rose **1.5 percent** to **\$385.4 billion** in January-June this year from **\$379.5 billion** in January-June 2022, according to an analysis by the **Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI)**.

Important day

Black Ribbon Day 2023

- **Black Ribbon Day** is observed on **23rd August** every year to improve the lives of people affected by **totalitarianism** and **totalitarian regimes** and to honor their sacrifices.
- It is officially the European Day of Remembrance for the victims of **Nazism** and **Stalinism** in the **West and the European Union**.

Madras Day

- **22nd August** is observed every year as "**Madras Day**" to celebrate the establishment of the city of **Madras** in **Tamil Nadu** in **1639**.
- This year marks the **384th anniversary** of the founding of the city. It is also significant that **Madras Day** started celebrating in **2004** with the initiative of a **small group** of people from the region.