

16.63 lakh Indians who renounced their Indian citizenship since 2011, including 2.25 lakh last year, according to External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar. In 2019, the number of Indians who renounced their Indian citizenship was 1.44 lakh, 85,256 in 2020 and 1.63 lakh in 2021.

353 satellites launched by India since 2014, according to Union Minister Jitendra Singh. He said India earned €187 million from European countries and \$39 million from the U.S. by launching satellites from 2014. He said that to promote public private participation, a PSU called 'New Space India Limited' has been established.

China's formal stance on the Russia-Ukraine conflict has been on the lines of "all countries deserve respect for their sovereignty and territorial integrity" and that "support should be given to all efforts that are conducive to peacefully resolving the crisis". However, outside the realm of discourse, China's actions do not seem to reflect the same. Recently, The Wall Street Journal has exposed China's covert assistance to Russia by accessing Russian customs data compiled by C4ADS, an American think tank. China's efforts to encourage Russia in a limited and covert manner, without raising alarms in the West seems to be to be intended to keep the war going.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the three-day Uttar Pradesh Global Investors' Summit (GIS), 2023 in Lucknow on Friday. The summit is aimed at showcasing the State as a major investment destination. Apart from Mr. Modi, the inaugural session will be addressed by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and corporate heads like Mukesh Ambani, Anand Mahindra, K. Chandrasekaran and Kumar Mangalam Birla. The event, which is considered critical for Uttar Pradesh, in its bid to become a \$1 trillion dollar economy will witness the participation of over 20 Union Ministers with countries such as Denmark and Singapore partnering in various sessions. It has set the target to attract investment proposals of ₹17.3 lakh crore.

The International Trade Union Confederation has questioned the Central government's decision to assign the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), the labour wing of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, the Chair of the L20 (Labour20). ITUC affiliated unions in G20 countries will hold a virtual meeting on Monday to discuss the negotiations and the situation so far. The ITUC is an umbrella organisation of trade unions from nearly 150

POOR OF A COUNTRY EMIT LESS, LOSS MORE: CLIMATE INEQUALITY REPORT 2023

1. Report, by World Inequality Lab, aims to shed light on various dimensions of climate inequality and suggest pathways to tackle climate inequalities.
2. **Key Highlights of the report**-Top 10% of global carbon emitters generate almost half of all greenhouse gas emissions. Difference between carbon emissions of the rich and poor within a country is now greater than differences in emissions between countries.
3. Climate Change aggravates low agricultural productivity in poorer countries, as well as water scarcity and security. Carbon budgets required to eradicate poverty remain relatively limited compared with global top emitters' footprints.
4. **Suggested Pathways**-Significant resources should be invested in production and collection of climate inequality statistics in all countries. Step-up efforts to honor climate finance pledges and further increase international development aid.
5. Windfall taxes on excess profits could help to fund low-carbon investment. Developing countries also need to reform their domestic tax systems to redistribute more from the wealthy. Systematically investigate both intended and unintended consequences of climate and development policy across income and wealth group.

RISE OF ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE (AMR) COULD RESULT IN UP TO 10 MILLION ANNUAL DEATHS BY 2050: UN REPORT

1. Findings are part of report by UN Environment Programme (UNEP) on environmental dimensions of AMR, which already is taking a serious toll on health of humans, animals, and plants, as well as the economy. AMR occurs when microorganisms such as bacteria, viruses, parasites, or fungi become resistant to antimicrobial treatments to which they were previously susceptible.

2. **Key Findings of the report**-Microorganisms (particularly bacteria) can acquire resistance following contact with resistant microorganisms that may have originated or introduced in environment. When antimicrobials are released into environment new AMR can develop by: Spontaneous mutation, acquisition, and transmission by mobile genetic elements. Horizontal gene transfer events between environmental and plant, animal, or human associated bacteria.

3. AMR challenges are closely linked to triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution and waste. 3 key sectors of AMR development and spread in environment: Pharmaceuticals and other chemical manufacturing, agriculture and food production, Healthcare.

4. Transmission and spread of AMR are not confined to point-sources. Transient and diffuse sources, which include water agricultural runoff, airborne transmission, wildlife migration etc can also be important.

CENTRAL BOARD OF DIRECT TAXES (CBDT) REVISES NORMS FOR PROCESSING OF EQUALISATION LEVY (EL)

1. Provisions are part of Centralised Processing of Equalisation Levy Statement Scheme, 2023 for processing of statements furnished under Finance Act, 2016. Presently, procedure for processing of EL statements is lacking which had created some uncertainty, especially regarding refund claims made. EL, also known as Google tax, is a direct tax introduced in 2016 to tax digital economy.

2. Applicable on non-residents e-commerce operators (ECO), it was initially (EL 1.0) levied at 6% of gross consideration on online advertisements and digital advertising space. In 2020 (EL 2.0), its scope was widened and new levy now includes a 2% tax on gross revenues received by a non-resident ECO from provision of 'e-commerce supply or service' to Indian residents or non-resident companies having a permanent establishment in India.

3. **Key highlights of revised norms**-Centralised Processing Centre of Income Tax department will process EL statements electronically. A new provision for faceless discussions. OECD has also given a 'Two-Pillar Solution' to address Tax Challenges Arising from Digitalisation of Economy. It is agreed by nearly 138 countries including India. Once adopted, it will replace unilateral measures or levies such as EL from India.

countries. In his letter to BMS general secretary Ravindra Himte, ITUC deputy general secretary Owen Tudor said 10 Central trade unions representing a majority of union members in India have unanimously opposed the Centre's appointment of the BMS as the Chair.

59.87 lakh cases pending in 25 High Courts (HC), Parliament was informed. Over 69,000 cases are pending in the Supreme Court. Law Minister Kiren Rijju said that 69,511 cases were pending in the top court as on February 1. Of the cases pending in the HCs, 10.30 lakh cases were from the Allahabad High Court.

10 proposals the government returned to the Supreme Court Collegium (SCC) for reconsideration, amid an ongoing tiff between the Executive and the Judiciary over the procedure to appoint judges, Law Minister Kiren Rijju informed Parliament. Of these, the SCC has reiterated its earlier recommendation for appointment in three cases.

India reiterated its call for an "inclusive and representative" government in Afghanistan on Wednesday, with National Security Adviser Ajit Doval declaring that the people of Afghanistan were among India's "foremost priorities." He was speaking at the '5th Regional Dialogue on Afghanistan' being held in Moscow. Addressing the delegates, Russian President Vladimir Putin said that Moscow was in contact with the Taliban rulers in Kabul, adding that large economic projects are under way in Afghanistan that could "stabilise the situation in the economy."

INDIAN FIRM SUCCESSFULLY TEST-FIRES WORLD'S FIRST 3D-PRINTED ROCKET ENGINE

1. Agnikul-Cosmos a space-tech startup incubated in IIT-Madras, has successfully conducted the flight acceptance test for its 3D printed rocket engine "Agnilet". Unlike other rocket engines, Agnilet was built in a single step, eliminating thousands of parts that are typically assembled in a conventional rocket engine.

2. It is a semi-cryogenic engine, which uses a mixture of liquid kerosene at room temperature and super cold liquid oxygen as fuel. During the test, it generated sea level thrust of 6 kilo Newton. Agnilet Engine will power the company's launch vehicle, Agnibaan, which can carry payloads of up to 100kg to a low-earth orbit.

3. Launch of Agnibaan will be the second by a private firm - after Hyderabad-based Skyroot Aerospace's Vikram-S, which took place in November 2022. Earlier Agnikul also unveiled India's first privately designed and operated rocket launchpad and mission control centre (located at Sriharikota).

4. It is specifically built to support liquid-stage controlled launches while also addressing ISRO's need for monitoring key flight safety parameters during launches.

DRAFT VIVAD SE VISHWAS-II SCHEME NOTIFIED BY MINISTRY OF FINANCE

1. Vivad se Vishwas (No Dispute but Trust) II Scheme will be a voluntary settlement scheme for contractual disputes of government and government undertakings, wherein arbitral award is under challenge in a court. Announcement regarding the scheme was made in Union Budget 2023-24. Scheme will cover disputes up to 30th September 2022.

2. **Salient Features of the Scheme Application:** It will apply to disputes where one of the parties is either Government of India or its following bodies (disputes with states govts, another private firm not covered): Centre's autonomous bodies. Public sector banks and financial institutions. All central public sector enterprises. UTs, including NCT of Delhi, and their agencies.

3. Organizations where the Centre has a 50% stake, like metro rail. Settlement: It offers a graded settlement terms depending on pendency level of the dispute. Implementation: It will be implemented through Government e-Marketplace (GeM). Proposed to cover only domestic arbitration and not international arbitration.

GROUNDWATER QUALITY

1. Central Ground Water Board found the groundwater in parts of Delhi brackish with high presence of nitrates and uranium. Brackish water is water that is saltier than fresh water, but not as salty as seawater.

2. Nitrate (NO₃) is a compound found in nature. Higher levels of nitrates are harmful for health, especially for babies. Its permissible limit is 45 mg/l. Uranium is a naturally occurring radioactive chemical element that occurs in low concentrations in nature. Uranium presence in drinking water can cause nephritis (kidney damage).



"Expectations breed misery."

DR. KHAN
(KSG)