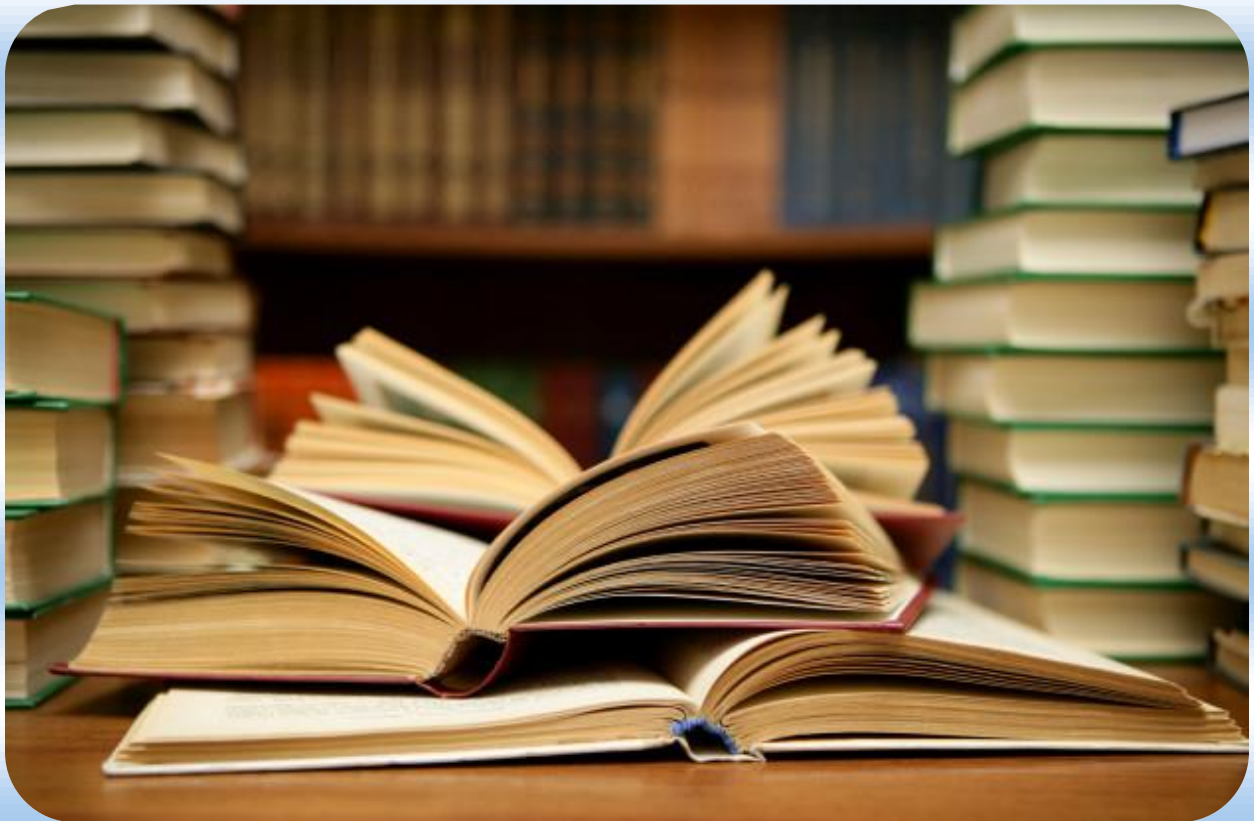


LIBRARY & RESOURCE CENTER, NOIDA

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE MONTHLY



NOVEMBER-2021

NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

RBI's Revised PCA framework

MUMBAI : The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Tuesday tweaked its prompt corrective action (PCA) framework to exclude the profitability parameter from its list of triggers. While capital, asset quality and profitability were the key areas for monitoring in 2017's framework, this time round capital, asset quality and leverage will be key areas. That apart, RBI has also revised the level of shortfall in total capital adequacy ratio that would push the lender to "risk threshold three" category. Lenders breaching this risk threshold have the most stringent restrictions placed under PCA.

What is the Global Methane Pledge?

The Global Methane Pledge was launched on Tuesday at the ongoing UN COP26 climate conference in Glasgow. So far, over 90 countries have signed this pledge, which is an effort led jointly by the United States and the European Union. Methane is the second-most abundant greenhouse gas in the atmosphere, after carbon dioxide, and, therefore, pledges related to cutting down its emissions are significant.



One Sun One World One Grid group

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday launched the Green Grids Initiative—One Sun One World One Grid (GGI-OSOWOG), the first international network of global interconnected solar power grids, jointly with his UK counterpart Boris Johnson, at COP26 here. "One Sun, One World & One Grid will not only reduce storage needs but also enhance the viability of solar projects. This creative initiative will not only reduce carbon footprints and energy cost but also open a new avenue for cooperation between different countries and regions," PM Modi said, while delivering his remarks at the 'Accelerating Clean Technology Innovation and Deployment' event at COP26.

Mission Ganga enters Guinness Book of World Records

The National Mission for Clean Ganga set a Guinness World Record on the first day of the Ganga Utsav for the highest number of photos of handwritten notes uploaded on Facebook in an hour.



SpaceX incorporates subsidiary in India

World's richest person Elon Musk-owned SpaceX on Monday incorporated its wholly-owned subsidiary in India to start local broadband operations, a top official of the company said. SpaceX's satellite broadband arm Starlink aims to start broadband services in India from December 2022, with 2 lakh active terminals subject to permission from the government.



Australia recognises India's Covaxin

The Government of Australia has recognised Bharat Biotech's Covaxin. This recognition from the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) of the Department of Health will enable travellers fully vaccinated with Covaxin to travel to the country. With Monday's announcement, Australia has become the first major economy to grant recognition to both the India manufactured vaccines - Covishield and Covaxin. An announcement from the TGA said the recognition was for travellers aged 12 and over.

Odisha announces full tax exemption for EVs

The Odisha government announced full exemption of motor vehicles taxes and registration fees on electric vehicles (EVs) in the state, as per an official notification. The decision was taken to encourage faster adoption of EVs, it said. In the notification, issued on Friday, the state government announced a 100 per cent exemption on motor vehicles taxes and registration fees for battery-operated vehicles. Taxation Act, is applicable till 2025.

Mazagon Dock delivers first Destroyer

Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) has delivered the first ship of the Project 15B Class Destroyer Visakhapatnam to the Indian Navy on October 28. She is likely to be commissioned in November and the Navy has invited Prime Minister Narendra Modi for this function. The vessel is constructed using indigenous steel and is among the largest destroyers constructed in India with an overall length of 164 meters and a displacement of over 7,500 tonnes. The ship is a potent platform capable of undertaking a variety of tasks and missions, spanning the full spectrum of maritime warfare.

Punjab to begin Census of Indus River Dolphin

The census of one of the world's most threatened cetaceans, the Indus river dolphin (*Platanista gangetica minor*) — a freshwater dolphin that is found in river Beas, is all set to commence in the winter as part of a project by the Centre. However, Punjab's wildlife preservation wing has gone a step ahead to not only protect the dolphins but also their natural habitat.



IRCTC starts Shri Ramayana Yatra Special Train

The Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) will be launching the Shri Ramayana yatra-Madhurai tour package of 13 nights/14 days on November 16 in order to boost religious tourism. The IRCTC has decided to launch the Ramayana Yatra special express train to meet the requirements of tourists from south India. As per the Indian Railways, the Shri Ramayana yatra Express-Madhurai will comprise sleeper class coaches and free food and other facilities.

Covid: 96 countries recognise India's vaccination certificate

As many as 96 countries have agreed to mutually recognise India's Covid-19 vaccination certificate, said Union health minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Tuesday. "At present, 96 countries have agreed to mutual recognition of vaccination certificates and also those who recognise Indian vaccination certificates of travellers fully vaccinated with Covishield/WHO approved/nationally approved Covid vaccines," Mandaviya stated.

Srinagar airport declared as 'Major airport'

The Union Ministry of Civil Aviation on Saturday declared the Srinagar airport as a "major airport" under the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority Act, 2008 (AERA). "In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (i) of Section 2 of the Airports Economic Authority Act, 2008 (NO. 27 OF 2008), the central government hereby declares the airport of Srinagar as major airport," reads the notification.



India's Rank in Global Drug Policy Index

The inaugural Global Drug Policy Index, released on Sunday by the Harm Reduction Consortium, ranks Norway, New Zealand, Portugal, the UK and Australia as the five leading countries on humane and health-driven drug policies.



India clinches women's doubles title in WTT Contender tournament

Indian pair of Manika Batra and Archana Girish Kamath clinched the women's doubles title in the WTT Contender tournament in Lasko on Sunday. Playing at Table 1 of Sports Hall Tri Lilije, the Indian duo defeated the Puerto Rican team of Melanie Diaz and Adriana Diaz in straight sets by 11-3, 11-8, 12-10.



“Tele-Law on Wheels” Campaign

The Department of Justice on Monday kicked off a week-long 'Tele-Law on Wheels' campaign to "empower people through pre-litigation advice for rightfully claiming their entitlements and for timely redressal of their difficulties".



LEADS (Logistics Ease Across Different States) 2021 Index

LEADS 2021 Index Rankings: Gujarat ranked 1st among 21 states on the national logistics index 2021 chart for its 'well-developed infrastructure and services driven by a responsive government'.



Mentorship Programme for Young Innovators launched

Union minister Jitendra Singh on Monday launched the first-ever mentorship programme for young innovators to mark the 75th year of India's independence. In a statement, the Ministry of Science and Technology said the government is taking a number of steps to promote scientific temper among the masses, particularly youngsters, by strengthening scientific research and innovation efforts in the country. The DBT-Star College Mentorship Programme' will help towards the concept of networking, hand holding and outreach, said Singh who is the Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science and Technology.

Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules 2011 amended

The central government has amended the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules 2011 making declaration of maximum retail price (MRP) in Indian currency inclusive of all taxes on pre packed commodities and date of manufacture mandatory. The amendments to come into effect from 1st April, 2022, said the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution.

Google Doodle: Who is Kamal Ranadive?

Indian biologist and Padma Bhushan awardee Kamal Ranadive has been featured in Google doodle on November 8, 2021, on her 104th birthday. The doodle by guest artist Ibrahim Rayintakath shows Dr. Ranadive in a lab with microscope and test tubes.



Srinagar joins UNESCO Creative Cities Network 2021

The 49 cities were added to the network of 246 cities following their designation by UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay, in recognition of 'their commitment to placing culture and creativity at the heart of their development and to sharing knowledge and good practices'.



Fifth anniversary of Demonetisation- Economic impacts

New Delhi: It has been five years since Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the demonetisation of 1000 and 500 rupee notes in a televised address on November 8, 2016 to achieve the objective of checking terror-funding by Pakistan, printing of counterfeit currency, black money and corruption. While the opposition criticised the Modi government over note ban, alleging that none of the four objectives of the move has been fulfilled, demonetisation has certainly helped not just the government but also the people at large.

Landsat 9 satellite sends 1st photos of Earth

Landsat 9, a joint mission between NASA and the US Geological Survey launched earlier this year, has collected its first light images of the Earth. The images show remote coastal islands and inlets of the Kimberley region of Western Australia, Glaciers high in the Himalayas, Lake Erie, white sands of Pensacola Beach and Florida and others.



SBI Financial Inclusion metrics report

Boosted by Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana, digital infrastructure and usage of banking correspondent or BC model for furthering financial inclusion, the number of bank branches per 100,000 adults in India rose to 14.7 in 2020 from 13.6 in 2015, which is higher than Germany, China and South Africa, according to an SBI report.



SIDBI- Google join hands to support MSMEs

Small Industries Development Bank of India (Sidbi) today said it has entered into a partnership with Google India Pvt Ltd (GIPL) for piloting a social impact lending programme with financial assistance up to ₹1 crore at competitive interest rates to MSMEs.



3 farm laws repealed after 1 year of protest

Narendra Modi has announced he will repeal three contentious farm laws that prompted a year of protests and unrest in India, in one of the most significant concessions made by his government. In a huge victory for India's farmers, who had fought hard for the repeal of what they called the "black laws", the prime minister announced in an address on Friday morning that "we have taken the laws back".



RBI: Banks to place consumer education info on websites

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday issued a set of clarifications on its existing asset classification guidelines and said banks must specify the exact due dates for repayment in loan agreements. The current norms state that a loan turns overdue if it is not repaid on the due date fixed by the bank. RBI said it has observed that due dates for repayments are sometimes not specifically mentioned in the loan agreements, and instead a description of due dates is mentioned, leaving scope for different interpretations.

PM launches two RBI initiatives for investors

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday launched two customer-centric initiatives of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)- the RBI Retail Direct Scheme and the Reserve Bank - Integrated Ombudsman Scheme. With this, India has opened up Government bond market for the retail investors. "With the RBI Retail Direct Scheme, small investors in the country have got a safe medium of investment in government securities," PM Modi said. The PM said that RBI's two innovative customer-centric initiatives will increase investment avenues, make accessing capital market easier, safer.

India gets re-elected to UNESCO Executive Board

India on Wednesday won the re-election to the executive board of the UN's cultural and education organisation for the 2021-25 term. "India gets reelected to the Executive Board of UNESCO with 164 votes for the term 2021-25," tweeted the Paris-based Permanent Delegation of India to UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization).



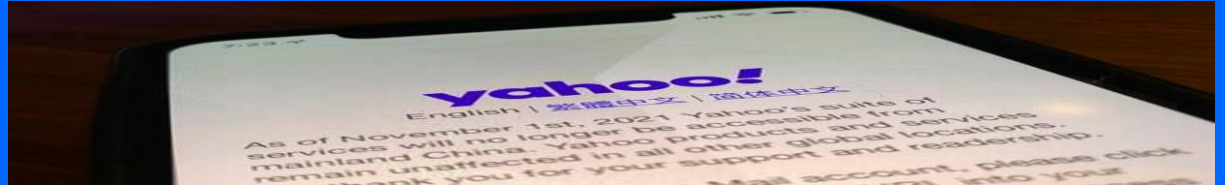
Cryptocurrency and Regulation of Official Digital Currency Bill, 2021

Cryptocurrency and Official Digital Currency Bill 2021 in Parliament (Updates): The Government will introduce the much-awaited 'The Cryptocurrency and Regulation of Official Digital Currency Bill 2021' in Parliament during the ongoing Winter Session. The Bill may be introduced in the coming days. It is not on the revised 'List of Business' of the Lok Sabha for November 30, 2021. Meanwhile, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday (November 30) said in Rajya Sabha that a new crypto bill will be introduced in the House after approval from the Cabinet.

INTERNATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

Yahoo pulls out of China

Yahoo Inc. said on Tuesday it has pulled out of China, citing an “increasingly challenging business and legal environment.” Chinese authorities maintain a firm grip on internet censorship in the country and require companies operating in China to censor content and keywords deemed politically sensitive or inappropriate.



New Zealand's annual Bird of The Year award

Pekapeka-tou-roa, a long-tailed bat that is one of New Zealand's two native land mammals, has won the country's Bird of the Year award. However, this had led to a controversy in the country as the title has been awarded to a native mammal instead of a bird. The award hosted by Forest and Bird (an independent conservation organization) is given after an annual competition. In this unique battle, New Zealanders rank their favourite birds out of the country's 200-odd native species. It also helps in raising awareness of their ecological plight.

Saudi Arabia excavates 'forgotten kingdoms'

AL ULA, Saudi Arabia, Nov 2 (Reuters) - Amid the arid desert and mountains of Al Ula in northwest Saudi Arabia, archaeologists are working to excavate the remnants of the ancient and long-forgotten kingdoms of Dadan and Lihyan.



Chilean President impeached

Chile's President Sebastián Piñera has been impeached by the lower house of congress, setting up a trial in the nation's senate over allegations he favored the sale of a family property while in office. The vote to impeach passed with the bare minimum of 78 votes needed in the 155-member chamber of deputies, and followed a marathon 20-hour session. Sixty-seven legislators voted against impeachment, including several members of the opposition. Others abstained or were absent.

Wang Yaping: First Chinese Woman to Walk in Space

Astronaut Wang Yaping has become the first Chinese woman to walk in space, authorities said Monday, as part of a six-month mission to the country's space station. Wang and fellow astronaut Zhai Zhigang left the main module of the Tiangong station for more than six hours to install equipment and carry out tests alongside the station's robotic arm as part of its ongoing construction, according to the China Manned Space Agency (CMS).



Abu Dhabi: Law on divorce, inheritance for non-Muslims

Abu Dhabi passed a law on Sunday allowing non-Muslims to marry, divorce and get joint child custody under civil law in the country. Before this, non-Muslims here had to get married in the embassy or consulate of their country. According to the Judicial Department of Abu Dhabi, the aim of this move is to provide "a flexible and advanced judicial mechanism for the determination of personal status disputes for non-Muslims, thus enhancing the Emirate's position and global competitiveness as one of the most attractive destinations for talent and skills".

Australia: Rover on the Moon Project

Last month the Australian Space Agency announced plans to send an Australian-made rover to the Moon by as early as 2026, under a deal with NASA. The rover will collect lunar soil containing oxygen, which could eventually be used to support human life in space.



Japan PM unveils \$490bn stimulus package

Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has unveiled a record-breaking stimulus package worth approximately 56 trillion Japanese yen (\$490bn). The government will compile an extra budget by the end of this year to fund the stimulus programme to deliver necessary aid to the public quickly, Kishida told a meeting of government and ruling party executives on Friday. The plan includes 100,000 yen (\$880) payments for those aged 18 years or younger, and aid for ailing businesses, Kishida and other politicians said.

Russia's Direct-Ascent Anti-Satellite (DA-ASAT) test

Russia has destroyed their own 2000 kg satellite, which had lived its life. Actually, the satellite was launched by the Soviet Union on September 16, 1982. The satellite called Cosmos 1408 was a Soviet ELINT (Electronic and Signals Intelligence) satellite. It has been reported that Russia has conducted an anti-satellite test (ASAT) on Nov 15, 2021. The test is known to have generated around 1500 pieces of detectable (trackable) debris in low earth orbit and in addition hundreds of thousands of very small pieces of space debris.

Russia starts delivery of S-400 missile systems to India

Russia has begun the delivery of S-400 Triumf surface-to-air missile systems to India, according to a senior Russian official. Russia's Director of the Federal Service for Military-Technical Cooperation (FSMTC) Dmitry Shugaev told Sputnik news agency that the deliveries are going on as planned. The development comes as both sides prepare for a visit to India by Russian President Vladimir Putin on December 6 for a bilateral summit with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Starlink launches new smaller dish to connect with satellites

SpaceX CEO Elon Musk's satellite Internet service Starlink has unveiled a new smaller and rectangular dish that interested customers can buy to tap into the company's growing satellite constellation in low Earth orbit.



S. Korea tests controlling Air Taxis

South Korea demonstrated a system for controlling urban air mobility vehicles (UAM) on Thursday, which it hopes will serve as taxis between major airports and downtown Seoul as soon as 2025, cutting travel time by two-thirds.



What is China's "Historical resolution"?

The Chinese Communist Party has passed a "historical resolution", cementing Xi Jinping's status in political history. The document, a summary of the party's 100-year history, addresses its key achievements and future directions. It is only the third of its kind since the founding of the party - the first was passed by Mao Zedong in 1945 and the second by Deng Xiaoping in 1981. It was passed on Thursday at the sixth plenary session, one of China's most important political meetings.

Sela Tunnel, world's longest bi-lane road tunnel

This is the Sela Tunnel, the longest bi-lane road tunnel in the world. The Sela tunnel is being constructed by the Border Roads Organisation at an altitude of 13,800ft near the Indo-China border. It is being built on the 317km long Balipara-Charduar-Tawang (BCT) road which connects West Kameng, East Kameng and Tawang districts of Arunachal Pradesh to the rest of the country.

World's largest solar power park in Bhadla

India's Bhadla Solar Park is the largest solar power park in the world. Bhadla Solar Park is located in Bhadla, a dry and sandy region in Rajasthan, and spans 14,000 acres. There are over 10 million solar panels at the park, which contribute to an operational capacity of 2245MW.



Barbados becomes the World's newest republic

After 396 years, the sun has set on the British monarchy's reign over the Caribbean island of Barbados, with a handover ceremony at midnight on Monday marking the birth of the world's newest republic.



World's tallest railway bridge pier to come up in Manipur

The Indian Railways is constructing the world's tallest bridge pier in Manipur which is a part of 111 km long Jiribam-Imphal railway project. The ambitious project in Manipur is part of the 111 km long Jiribam-Imphal railway line to connect the capital of Manipur with the broad gauge network of the country.



WHO: Omicron Poses Very High Global Risk

The heavily mutated Omicron coronavirus variant is likely to spread internationally and poses a very high risk of infection surges that could have “severe consequences” in some places, the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Monday. No Omicron-linked deaths had yet been reported, though further research was needed to assess its potential to escape protection against immunity induced by vaccines and previous infections, it added. In anticipation of increased case numbers as the variant, first reported last week in South Africa, spreads, the UN agency urged its 194 member states to accelerate vaccination of high-priority groups and ensure plans were in place to maintain health services.

Czech Republic: Petr Fiala named new PM

Leader of the incoming coalition government Petr Fiala has been named the Czech Republic's new prime minister in an unusual ceremony, with COVID-stricken President Milos Zeman speaking from behind a plastic barrier. Fiala will face the urgent task of grappling with one of the world's highest COVID infection rates, including a case of the new Omicron variant.



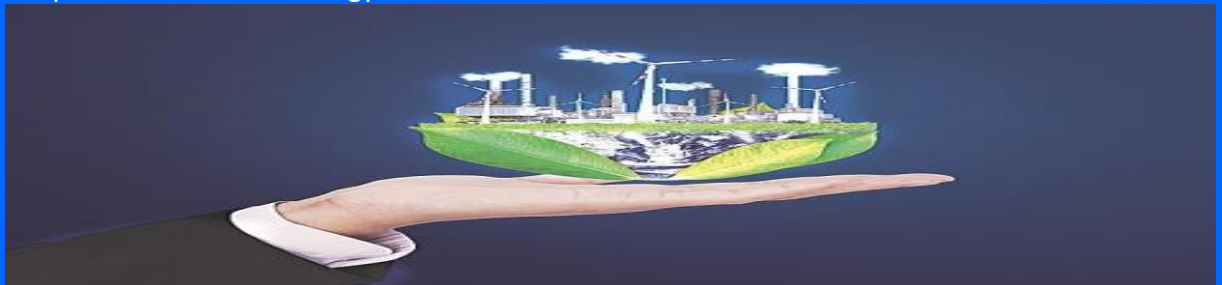
Russian Docking Module Arrives at ISS

A Russian cargo craft carrying a new docking module successfully hooked up with the International Space Station Friday after a two-day space journey. The new spherical module, named Prichal (Pier), docked with the orbiting outpost at 6:19 p.m. Moscow time (1519 GMT).



Climate Change: Germany announces Euro 1.2 bn to aid India

Germany has announced new development commitments to the tune of more than EUR 1.2 billion (approx. INR 10,025 crore) to aid India's fight against climate change and for cooperation on clean energy.



Israel's airstrike on central Syria

Syria's military said Israeli warplanes attacked army positions in the country's central region early Wednesday, leaving two civilians dead and seven people wounded – six of them soldiers. State media quoted an unnamed military official as saying the warplanes fired missiles while flying over the airspace of neighbouring Lebanon. State news agency SANA quoted the official as saying that the strike occurred at 1.26 a.m. (2326 GMT).

US invites Taiwan to its Summit for Democracy

Washington: The Biden administration has invited Taiwan to its "Summit for Democracy" next month, according to a list of participants published on Tuesday, a move that infuriated China, which views the democratically governed island as its territory. The first-of-its-kind gathering is a test of President Joe Biden's assertion, announced in his first foreign policy address in office in February, that he would return the United States to global leadership to face down authoritarian forces led by China and Russia.

Russia stresses two-state solution to Israeli-Palestinian conflict

Russian President Vladimir Putin has said that his country adheres to the "two-state solution" regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The current conflict between the Israelis and Palestinians must be resolved in accordance with previously adopted resolutions at the UN Security Council, Xinhua news agency quoted Putin as saying during a meeting with visiting Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in Sochi. The problem must be solved on an equitable basis that takes into account the interests of all people living in the region, Putin stressed.

IQAir: 94 of 100 most polluted cities in India, China, Pakistan

Air pollution continues to present one of the world's biggest health hazards to people everywhere, contributing to about 7 million premature deaths annually. 600,000 of these deaths are children.



Australia signs submarine deal with U.S., U.K.

Australia formally embarked on Monday on a hotly contested programme to equip its Navy with nuclear-powered submarines in a new defence alliance with Britain and the United States.



UK to host G7 foreign, development ministers' summit

The United Kingdom is set to host a summit of Foreign and Development Ministers from the G7 next month in the city of Liverpool, UK foreign office said on Sunday (local time). UK Foreign Secretary Liz Truss will welcome counterparts from the US, France, Germany, Italy, Canada, Japan and the EU over three days, from December 10-12. The UK is holding the G7 Presidency in 2021 and this is the second in-person gathering of G7 Foreign Ministers this year, following May's meeting in London.

Amazon Deforestation reaches 15 years high

The area deforested in Brazil's Amazon reached a 15-year high after a 22 per cent jump from the prior year, according to official data published Thursday. The National Institute for Space Research's Prodes monitoring system showed the Brazilian Amazon lost 13,235 square kilometers of rainforest in the 12-month reference period from Aug. 2020 to July 2021. That's the most since 2006. The 15-year high flies in the face of Bolsonaro government's recent attempts to shore up its environmental credibility.

Gaofen-11 03- China launches a new satellite

China launched a new satellite from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in the northern province of Shanxi on Saturday. The satellite, Gaofen-11 03, was launched by a Long March-4B rocket at 9:51 a.m. (Beijing Time) and entered the planned orbit successfully, Xinhua news agency reported.

