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1. India remains at 40th position in Global Innovation Index 2023 (Sept. 28, 2023)

India has retained its 40th position among 132 economies in the Global Innovation Index 2023.

An Overview of the News

- The ranking reflects India's continued progress in the GII, improving from 81st in 2015 to 40th in 2023.
- India's improved GII ranking can be attributed to factors such as its rich knowledge capital, vibrant startup ecosystem and notable contributions from both public and private research organizations.
- Various government departments including the Department of Science and Technology, Biotechnology, Space and Atomic Energy have played an important role in enhancing the national innovation ecosystem.
- Initiatives like Atal Innovation Mission have been helpful in expanding this ecosystem.

Efforts of NITI Aayog:

- NITI Aayog has been actively involved in promoting policy-driven innovation in areas such as electric vehicles, biotechnology, nanotechnology, space technology and alternative energy sources.
- It has also worked to promote innovation at the state and district level.
- NITI Aayog has continuously monitored and evaluated India's global rankings, including the GII.

Importance of GII:

- The Global Innovation Index (GII) serves as a valuable tool for governments around the world to assess the impact of innovation on social and economic changes in their respective countries.
- Over time, the GII has become an essential policy tool for governments, helping them assess their current position in terms of innovation.

Collaboration with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII):

- The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has been supportive of India's journey towards becoming an innovation-driven economy.
- In 2023, NITI Aayog, in partnership with CII and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), is hosting the Virtual India Launch of GII 2023 on 29 September.

2. Singapore on top and India at 80th position in Henley Passport Index 2023 (July 19, 2023)

Singapore-on-top-and-India-at-80th-position-in-Henley-Passport-Index-2023

Singapore has topped the Henley Passport Index 2023, becoming the most powerful passport in the world.

An Overview of the News

- **Singapore** passport holders are **granted visa-free access** to an impressive **192 out of 227 global travel destinations**.
- Three European countries, namely **Germany, Italy and Spain, now rank second in the index. Their passports provide visa-free access to 190 destinations.**
- **Japan, which held the top position for the last five years, is now ranked third in the index.** Apart from this, **Austria, Finland, France, Japan, South Korea, Luxembourg, and Sweden are also in third place, their passport holders can travel to 189 destinations without visa.**

India's rank in Henley Passport Index

- India has shown remarkable progress on the Henley Passport Index, improving its ranking by 5 places as compared to the previous year.
- India is currently **ranked 80th along with Togo and Senegal.**
- Indian passport holders now enjoy **visa-free access to 57 countries, reflecting the country's enhanced global travel privileges.**

Pakistan ranks 100th on the Henley Passport Index and its passport gives holders visa-free access to 33 destinations.

About Henley Passport Index

- Introduced by **Dr. Christian H. Kaelin, President of Henley & Partners, almost 20 years ago.**
- It calculates passport rankings based on **exclusive and official data from the International Air Transport Association (IATA).**
- The index considers the number of destinations that passport holders can travel to without prior visas.
- The methodology used by the Henley Passport Index differs from other passport rankings, such as those published by **financial advisors Arton Capital.**
- The index relies entirely on data from the **International Air Transport Association to determine its rankings.**

3. NITI Aayog released 'Export Preparedness Index (EPI) 2022' report (July 19, 2023)

The ITI Commission released the 3rd edition of 'Export Preparedness Index (EPI) 2022' for the States/UTs of India.

An Overview of the News

- The report was released by Vice President Suman Berry and other officials.
- It aims to promote India as a global export player by leveraging regional competitiveness and diversity.
- The focus is on export performance both at the state and district levels.

Objectives of EPI 2022

- Empowering state governments with sector-specific insights for decision making.
- Identify strengths and address weaknesses to promote comprehensive development.
- To promote competitive federalism among the States/UTs.

Four Pillars of EPI 2022

1. **Policy pillar:** Evaluates the adoption of the export-related policy ecosystem and institutional framework at the state and district levels.
2. **Business Ecosystem:** Assesses the business environment, supporting infrastructure and transport connectivity in the States/UTs.
3. **Export ecosystem:** Focuses on export-related infrastructure, business support and research and development (R&D) to foster innovation.
4. **Export Performance:** Measures the growth, concentration and global market footprint of a state's exports.

Ten sub-pillars - Export Promotion Policy, Institutional Framework, Business Environment, Infrastructure, Transport, Connectivity, Export Infrastructure, Trade Support, R&D Infrastructure, Export Diversification, and Growth Orientation

Top Performing States/UTs

Coastal states including Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Gujarat performed well in all categories.

EPI 2022 Rankings

Rank	State	Category	Score
1	Tamil Nadu	Coastal	80.89
2	Maharashtra	Coastal	78.20
3	Karnataka	Coastal	76.36
4	Gujarat	Coastal	73.22

5	Haryana	Landlocked	63.65
6	Telangana	Landlocked	61.36
7	Uttar Pradesh	Landlocked	61.23
8	Andhra Pradesh	Coastal	59.27
9	Uttarakhand	Himalayan	59.13
10	Punjab	Landlocked	58.95

4. Union Ministry of Education releases Performance Grading Index for States (July 10, 2023)

Performance-Grading-Index-for-States

The Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education released the **Performance Grading Index (PGI)** report for States/UTs, an index for evidence based comprehensive analysis of school education system in State/UTs.

An Overview of the news:

- According to PGI, even though the states have been successful to a great extent in recent years in connecting most of the children to schools, they are still far behind in the standards of teaching-learning and quality.

PGI 2.0:

- This year's report released by the Ministry of Education has been named **PGI 2.0**.

Punjab and Chandigarh on top in overall ranking:

- No state has been found in the top-5 category of PGI. Punjab and Chandigarh have been placed at the top position with the highest number of points in the overall ranking of PGI.
- While on the parameters of learning outcome and quality, **Rajasthan** has also topped with **Punjab and Chandigarh** with the highest marks.

Six Standards and Ten Categories:

- The Ministry has set **six standards and ten categories** in place of the earlier **five standards and eight categories** to determine the performance of the states in school education, in which the subject of teacher education has been added anew.
- In these indexes, the weightage (marks) given on the basis of government work has been reduced.

Six Standards of PGI 2.0:

- Among the six parameters on the basis of which this grade of states has been prepared,

- Learning Outcome and Quality,
- Access to School
- Infrastructure and Facilities,
- Equality,
- Governance Management and
- Includes teacher education and training.
- States have been given marks on the basis of 73 different parameters of all these.

Ten categories of PGI:

- The ten categories that have been created under PGI, which is based on 1000 marks, include:
- Daksha (941-1000)
- Utkarsh (881-940)
- Ati Uttam(821-880)
- Uttam (761-820)
- Prachesta-1(701-760)
- Prachesta-2 (641-700)
- Prachesta-3 (581-640)
- Aspirant-1 (521-580)
- Aspirant- 2 (461-520) and
- Akankshi-3 (401-460).

No state in top five:

- In the PGI-2.0 report for the year 2021-22, there is no state in the top-5 categories in the overall ranking, while **Punjab and Chandigarh** have found place in the sixth category i.e. **Prachesta-2**.
- Gujarat, Kerala, Maharashtra, Delhi, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu were in the seventh category i.e. **Prachesta-3**.
- Thirteen states have made it to the eighth category of overall ranking i.e. **Aspirational-1**, including Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Sikkim, West Bengal, Andaman and Nicobar, Lakshadweep, Daman and Dadar Nagar Haveli is included.
- 12 states including Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand have made it to the ninth category i.e. **Akankshi-2**.

5. Global Gender Gap Index 2023 (June 24, 2023)

Global-Gender-Gap-Index-2023

India ranks 127 out of 146 countries in the Global Gender Gap Index 2023.

An Overview of the News

- The Global Gender Gap Index was **established in 2006** and this is **its 17th edition**.
- It is published annually by the **World Economic Forum (WEF)**.
- It measures gender equality in **146 countries** and enables cross-country analysis.

Global Gender Gap Score:

- The global gender gap score for **2023 is 68.4%**, showing an improvement of **0.3 percentage** points from **last year**.
- None of the countries included in the index have achieved full gender equality.
- The top 9 **countries including Iceland, Norway, Finland and New Zealand have reduced the gender gap by 80%**.

Iceland: The most gender-equal country:

- Iceland has been ranked first as the most gender-equal country in the world for the **14th consecutive year with a score of 91.2%**.
- Iceland is the only country that has reduced the gender gap by **more than 90%**.

Progress of South Asia:

- In South Asia, the gender gap score has increased by 1.1 percentage points since the last edition.
- Among India's neighbouring countries, **Pakistan is at 142, Bangladesh at 59, China at 107, Nepal at 116, Sri Lanka at 115 and Bhutan at 103**.

India's ranking and progress:

- India has moved up 8 places to rank **127 out of 146 countries in the 2023 Global Gender Gap Index**.
- India has shown an improvement of **1.4 percentage points from the 2022 figures**.
- **Education and Economic Participation:**
 - India has achieved parity in enrollment at all levels of education, reducing the overall gender gap by 64.3%.
 - However, India has reached only 36.7% equality in economic participation.
 - India was ranked 135 in the 2022 edition.
- **Representation in senior positions and technical roles:**
 - Despite increases in pay and income equality, the representation of women in senior positions and technical roles in India has decreased slightly since the last edition.
- **Political Empowerment:**
 - India recorded 25.3% equality in terms of political empowerment.
 - Women represent 15.1% of parliamentarians, the highest figure for the country since 2006.

Women's representation in local government:

- Of the 117 countries with available data from 2017, 18 have achieved more than 40% female representation in local governance, including Bolivia, India and France.

Improvement in sex ratio at birth:

- The report highlights India's progress with an improvement in the sex ratio at birth by 1.9 percentage points, bringing equality after a decade of slow progress.

Global Gender Gap Index 2023 Ranking

1. Iceland - 0.912
2. Norway - 0.879
3. Finland - 0.863
4. New Zealand - 0.856
5. Sweden - 0.815
6. Germany - 0.815
7. Nicaragua - 0.811
8. Namibia - 0.802
9. Lithuania - 0.800
10. Belgium - 0.796

6. NTPC climbs up 52 positions to 433rd rank in Forbes' "The Global 2000" List (June 15, 2023)

The-Global-2000

NTPC Limited, India's largest power generation company, has made significant progress in Forbes' "The Global 2000" List for 2023, climbing **52 positions to reach the 433rd rank**.

An overview of the news

- This remarkable advancement showcases NTPC's growing influence and presence in the **global market**.
- It is a testament to the company's consistent expansion, strong financial performance, and unwavering commitment to excellence.
- "The Global 2000" List compiled by Forbes acknowledges the world's largest companies based on **four key metrics: sales, profits, assets, and market value**.
- NTPC's significant climb in the rankings from the **485th position in 2022** to the **433rd position in 2023** underscores its exceptional performance across these metrics.

- In addition to its global ranking, NTPC has also secured the **10th position among the largest Indian companies** on the list, moving up one spot compared to the previous year.

About NTPC

- NTPC formerly known as **National Thermal Power Corporation of India** is owned by the **Government of India**. It was established in 1975.
- **Vindhyachal Thermal Power Station in Singrauli district** of Madhya Pradesh, with an installed capacity of **4,760 MW**, is currently the **largest thermal power plant in India**.
- It is a coal based power plant owned and operated by NTPC.
- The company had a total installed commercial capacity of **69454 MW before the JPL deal**.
- Headquarters: **New Delhi**
- Chairman and Managing Director: **Gurdeep Singh**

7. Reliance climbs eight spots to 45th rank on Forbes' Global 2000 list (June 14, 2023)

Reliance-climbs-eight-spots-to-45th-rank-on-Forbes'-Global-2000-list
Billionaire **Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries Ltd** climbed **eight spots** to the **45th rank**, the highest for an Indian company on **Forbes' latest Global 2000 list** of public companies worldwide.

An overview of the news

- This achievement marks the highest position for an Indian company on the list.
- The Global 2000 ranks public companies worldwide based on **sales, profits, assets, and market value**.

JPMorgan tops the list

- JPMorgan, America's largest bank with **\$3.7 trillion in assets**, has secured the top spot on the **Global 2000 list**.
- This marks its first time at the **top since 2011**.
- The bank's strong performance during the regional banking crisis, coupled with increased deposits and the opportunistic acquisition of the failed First Republic Bank, contributed to its ranking.
- **Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway**, which topped the list in the previous year, fell to the 338th position in the latest ranking.
- This decline is attributed to unrealized losses in its investment portfolio.

Saudi Arabia's oil giant, Aramco, holds the **second position** on the list.

Indian firms on the list

- Reliance Industries leads as the **highest-ranked Indian company at the 45th spot**.
- Other notable Indian firms include **State Bank of India** at 77th, **HDFC Bank** at 128th, **ICICI Bank** at 163rd, and Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) at 387th.
- A total of **55 Indian companies** made it to the **Global 2000 list**, including Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), HDFC, Life Insurance Corporation (LIC), and Tata Steel.

Gautam Adani's conglomerate firms

- Three companies from Gautam Adani's conglomerate are included in the list. **Adani Enterprises** secured the **1062nd position**, Adani Power is at 1488th, and Adani Ports & Special Economic Zones is at 1598th.

8. Global Slavery Index 2023 (June 14, 2023)

Global Slavery Index

The **Walk Free Foundation** recently released the **Global Slavery Index 2023**, an assessment of modern slavery conditions in **160 countries**.

An overview of the news

- Global Slavery Index 2023 is the fifth edition and is **based on the estimates from 2022**.
- The global slavery index provides an overview of modern slavery.
- According to the report approximately **50 million individuals** were living in “**modern slavery**” on any given day in 2021.
- Of the 50 million affected people, 28 million suffer from forced labor, while 22 million face forced marriage. Remarkably, 12 million of those affected are children.

What is Modern Slavery?

- It refers to situations of exploitation that a person cannot refuse or leave because of **threats, violence, coercion, deception, or abuses of power**.
- Modern slavery is a term that covers various forms of **exploitation, including forced labor, forced marriage, debt bondage, sexual exploitation, human trafficking, slavery-like practices, forced or servile marriage**, and the sale and exploitation of children.

Key findings of the report

- **Countries with the highest prevalence:** Based on available data, the following countries have been identified as having the highest prevalence of modern slavery: North Korea, Eritrea, Mauritania, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey. These countries exhibit a relatively higher incidence of individuals living in modern slavery compared to others.
- **Countries with the lowest prevalence:** On the other hand, certain countries have been found to have the lowest prevalence of modern slavery. These countries include Switzerland, Norway, Germany, Netherlands, and Sweden. They have comparatively lower instances of individuals living in modern slavery within their populations.
- **Countries with the maximum number of people living in modern slavery:** India, China, North Korea, Pakistan, and Russia have been identified as countries with the highest number of people living in modern slavery.
- **G20 nations hosting the maximum number of people living in modern slavery:** Out of the G20 nations, which represent the world's major economies, six members have been found to host the highest number of individuals living in modern slavery. These countries are India, China, Russia, Indonesia, Turkey, and the United States.

What is the Prevalence of Modern slavery?

- The prevalence of modern slavery refers to the incidence of individuals living in **modern slavery per 1000 population.**

What is the Global Slavery Index?

- The Global Slavery Index is a comprehensive report developed by **Walk Free**, a respected human rights organization.
- The index draws upon data provided by the Global Estimates of Modern Slavery, a collaborative effort by the **International Labour Organization (ILO), Walk Free, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).**
- These organizations work together to gather and analyze data on modern slavery worldwide.
- The recently published Global Slavery Index is the **fifth edition** of the report.
- It represents the most up-to-date information available on the prevalence of modern slavery.
- The data used in this edition is based on estimates from 2022, providing insights into the current state of modern slavery.
- One of the key aspects examined by the Global Slavery Index is the prevalence of modern slavery within different countries.
- To determine this, the index calculates the incidence of **modern slavery per 1000 population.**
- This measurement provides a standardized way to compare the scale of modern slavery across countries.

9. India's AI supercomputer 'AIRAWAT' ranked 75th in Global Supercomputing list (May 25, 2023)

AIRAWAT

The **AI Supercomputer 'AIRAWAT'**, installed at **C-DAC, Pune** has been **ranked 75th in the top 500 Global Supercomputing List.**

An overview of the news

- The announcement was made during the **61st edition** of the **International Supercomputing Conference (ISC 2023)** held in **Germany.**
- The establishment of '**AIRAWAT**' at **C-DAC Pune** is part of the **National Program on AI** initiated by the Government of India.

About supercomputer AIRAWAT

- AIRAWAT is the name for an in-house **cloud platform for big data.**
- The proposed AIRAWAT system is a **100+ petaflop AI-focused supercomputer.**
- There are parallels drawn to Japan's AI Bridging Cloud Interface supercomputer in the NITI Aayog report.
- This system is a **130 petaflop** computer focused on providing compute for AI, ML and big data tasks.

What are supercomputers?

- A supercomputer can perform high-level processing at a **faster rate than a normal computer.**
- They work together to perform complex operations that are not possible with normal computing systems.
- Fast speed and fast memory are the characteristics of supercomputers.
- The performance of a supercomputer is generally evaluated in petaflops.

National Supercomputing Mission

- The National Supercomputing Mission was **launched In 2015.**
- The aim of the mission was **to enhance the research capacities in the country** to form a **Supercomputing grid.**
- It supports the government's vision of '**Digital India**' and '**Make in India**' **initiatives.**
- The mission is being jointly operated by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).**

- It is implemented by Center for **Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC)**,
- **Pune** and IISc, Bengaluru.

Some important facts about supercomputer

- China has the maximum number of supercomputers followed by the **US, Japan, France, Germany, Netherlands, Ireland and the United Kingdom..**
- India's first supercomputer - **PARAM 8000**
- first supercomputer assembled indigenously - **PARAM Shivay, installed in IIT (BHU)**
- **PARAM Shakti, PARAM Brahma, PARAM Yukti, PARAM Sanganak** are some name of india's supercomputers.
- India's **PARAM-Siddhi AI**, has been ranked 63rd in the Top 500 list of most powerful supercomputers in the world.

10. Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways ranked 2nd on Data Governance Quality Index (May 13, 2023)

The **Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW)** has been **ranked second among 66 ministries in the Data Governance Quality Index (DGQI)** assessment for the **December quarter (Q3) of FY23.**

An overview of the news

- The **ministry scored 4.7 out of 5**, indicating its commitment to excellence in data governance.
- Conducted by the **Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO), NITI Aayog**, the DGQI survey aims to measure the maturity level of administrative data systems and their use in decision making of various ministries and departments on the implementation of central sector schemes.
- MoPSW's success in DGQI assessment was aided by the concerted efforts of the National **Technology Center for Ports, Waterways and Coasts (NTCPWC)** at IIT Madras, which was tasked to improve MoPSW's Management Information System (MIS) in compliance with DGQI standards I went.

Six key indicators

- The DGQI assessment covers six key themes including data generation, data quality, use of technology, data analysis, access and dissemination, data security and human resource capability, and case studies.

Data Governance Quality Index (DGQI)

- The Data Governance Quality Index (DGQI) survey is conducted by NITI Aayog's Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office.

- The survey aims to evaluate the performance of different Ministries /Departments in
- implementing Central Sector Schemes (CS) and Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS).