



## #STATE OF EDUCATION REPORT IN INDIA 2020

- The 'State of the Education Report for India 2020: **Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)**, was launched virtually by UNESCO New Delhi recently.

### Main highlights of the report

- The **second edition of the State of Education Report** focuses on **technical and vocational education and training (TVET)**.
- India has made **considerable progress towards its goal of creating a skilled workforce of 110 million people by 2022**, as stated in the **National Policy of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (NPSDE)**, released in 2015.
- It is presently **training 10 million** youth annually.
- The Report outlines a set of **ten recommendations** that should be adopted to help achieve the **stated vision for TVET in the country**.

### The ten recommendations:

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Place learners and their aspirations at the centre of <b>vocational education and training programmes</b>.</li></ul>                             |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Create an <b>appropriate ecosystem for teachers, trainers and assessors</b>.</li></ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Focus on <b>upskilling, re-skilling and lifelong learning</b>.</li></ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ensure <b>inclusive access to TVET</b> for women, differently abled and disadvantaged learners.</li></ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Massively <b>expand the digitalization</b> of vocational education and training.</li></ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Support <b>local communities to generate livelihoods</b> by engaging in the preservation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage.</li></ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Align better with the <b>2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</b>.</li></ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Deploy <b>innovative models</b> of financing TVET.</li></ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Expand evidence-based research</b> for better planning and monitoring.</li></ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Establish a <b>robust coordinating mechanism</b> for inter-ministerial cooperation.</li></ul>  |

### Some Indian initiatives to Improve Education Sector

#### National Education Policy 2020

- The **teacher must be at the centre** of the fundamental reforms in the education system.
- The **new education policy** must help recruit the very best and brightest to enter the **teaching profession at all levels**, by ensuring livelihood, respect, dignity, and autonomy, while also instilling in the system basic methods of quality control and accountability.

## Revitalising Infrastructure and Systems in Education (RISE) by 2022:

- Focuses on **qualitatively upgrading the research and academic infrastructure** in India to global best standards **by 2022**.
- Its aim is to make India into an education hub by making available **high-quality research infrastructure** in Indian higher educational institutions.

## UGC's Learning Outcome-based Curriculum Framework (LOCF)

- LOCF guidelines, **issued by UGC in 2018**, aim to specify what graduates are expected to know, understand and be able to do at the end of their **programme of study**. This is to make students an active learner and teacher a good facilitator.
- **Global Initiative for Academics Network (GIAN):** The programme **seeks to invite distinguished academicians, entrepreneurs**, scientists, experts from premier institutions from across the world, to teach in the higher educational institutions in India.
- **All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE):** The main objectives of the survey are to identify & capture all the institutions of higher learning in the country; and collect the data from all the higher education institutions on various aspects of higher education.
- **e-Pathshala:** It was **launched in 2015** with an aim to promote self-learning among the school students. The **portal hosts various school teachers, researchers, experts, parents, and most importantly students** who can access the facility of resolving their queries.

## #INDIA RANKED 10<sup>TH</sup> IN CCPI 2021

India ranked **10<sup>th</sup>** in **Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) 2021**. India, for the **second time in a row**, continued to remain in the **top 10**. Last year, India had been ranked at the **ninth position**.



### About Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI):

- **Published by:** **Germanwatch, the New Climate Institute** and the **Climate Action Network** annually since **2005**.
- **Scope:** It is an independent monitoring tool for tracking the climate protection performance of **57 countries and the European Union**.
- These countries together **generate 90%+ of global greenhouse gas emissions**.
- **Aim:** It aims to **enhance transparency** in international climate politics and enables comparison of climate protection efforts and progress made by individual countries.
- **Criteria:** The CCPI looks at **four categories**, with 14 indicators: **Greenhouse Gas Emissions** (40% of the overall score), **Renewable Energy** (20%), **Energy Use** (20%), and **Climate Policy** (20%).

## CCPI 2021:

- Top three ranks were empty **as** no country had met the criteria **to get placed high enough on the index.**
- **Only two G20** nations, **the** United Kingdom and India **are among the high rankers in** CCPI 2021, which covers the year 2020.
- **Six other** G20 nations **including the** USA, Canada, South Korea, Russia, Australia and Saudi Arabia **are** ranked at the bottom **of the index.**
- **This is the** second time in a row **that the USA (ranked last), which is the** largest historical polluter, **is ranked at the bottom.**
- China, **which is the biggest current emitter of greenhouse gases, is ranked at the** 33<sup>rd</sup> position **on the** CCPI 2021 report.

## India's Performance:

- **Overall Performance:** India ranked **10<sup>th</sup>** and scored **63.98 points** out of 100.
- **Renewable Energy:** India has been ranked at **27<sup>th</sup>** out of 57 countries under the category this time. **Last year,** the country was ranked at **26<sup>th</sup>.**
- In September 2019, at the United Nations Climate Action Summit, India announced **increasing the renewable energy target to 450 GW** by 2030 from 175 GW by 2022.
- In its **Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC)**, India has pledged to increase the **share of non-fossil fuels-based electricity to 40% by 2030.**
- **Emissions:** Per capita emissions stayed at a comparatively **low level.** India was **ranked 12<sup>th</sup>.**
- **BS-VI Emission Norms:** India moved to **BS-VI Emission Norms** to control the emissions from the automobiles.
- **Climate Policy:** India's performance was rated as **medium (13<sup>th</sup>).**
- The **National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC)** was launched in 2008 which aims at creating awareness among the representatives of the public, different agencies of the government, scientists, and the industry on the threat posed by climate change and the steps to counter it.
- **Energy Use:** India was ranked **High (10<sup>th</sup>)** under this category.
- The country has not only established a comprehensive policy for energy efficiency – **National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency (NMEEE)**, but has also executed successful demand side management programmes for consumers and municipal

corporations to achieve overall energy savings while gradually mitigating the impact of climate change.

- NMEEE is a **part of NAPCC**.

## #HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX RELEASED BY UNDP

- **India ranked 131** among 189 countries on the **Human Development Index (HDI) for 2019, slipping two places from the previous year**, according to the **Human Development Report (HDR) 2020** released by the **United Nations Development Program (UNDP)**.
- The 2020 Report has **introduced planetary pressures-adjusted Human Development Index**, which adjusts the standard Human Development Index (HDI) by a country's **per capita carbon dioxide emissions and material footprint**.
- The **other indices that form the part of the Report** are:
  - Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI),
  - Gender Development Index (GDI),
  - Gender Inequality Index (GII) and
  - Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI).



### Human Development Index:

- **About:** HDI **emphasizes** that people and their capabilities should be the ultimate criteria for assessing the development of a country, not economic growth alone.
- **Based on three Basic Dimensions of Human Development:**
  - A long and healthy life,
  - Access to knowledge, and
  - A decent standard of living.

**Top Performers for 2019:** Norway topped the index, followed by Ireland and Switzerland. Hong Kong and Iceland complete the top five.

- **Performance of the Asian Region:**
- Singapore was ranked 11, Saudi Arabia 40, and Malaysia was at 62 in the global index, representing the **top bracket among the Asian countries** with **"very high human development"**.



- Sri Lanka (72), Thailand (79), China (85) and Indonesia and Philippines (both 107), and Vietnam (117), among others, were **“high human development” countries**.
- **India**, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal, Cambodia, Kenya and Pakistan were ranked among countries with **“medium human development”** with ranks between 120 and 156.

### India's Performance:

- **Overall Performance:** HDI value for 2019 is **0.645**, which puts the country in the **medium human development category**, positioning it at **131 out of 189 countries** and territories.
- Between 1990 and 2019, India's HDI value increased from 0.429 to 0.645, an increase of 50.3%.
- **Long and Healthy Life:** Life expectancy for Indian's at birth was **69.7 years in 2019**, slightly **lower than the south Asian average of 69.9 years**.
- Between 1990 and 2019, India's **life expectancy at birth increased by 11.8 years**.
- **Access to Knowledge:** The **expected years of schooling** in India was **12.2 years**, compared with 11.2 years in Bangladesh and 8.3 years in Pakistan.
- Between 1990 and 2019, **mean years of schooling increased by 3.5 years**, and **expected years of schooling increased by 4.5 years**.
- **A Decent Standard of Living:** In terms of **Gross National Income (GNI) per capita**, **India at USD 6,681 fared better** than some others in 2019, despite a **fall over the previous year**.
- India's GNI per capita **increased by about 273.9% between 1990 and 2019**.

### Planetary pressures-adjusted Human Development Index (PHDI):

- **About:** The PHDI adjusts the standard HDI by a country's level of carbon dioxide emissions and material footprint, each on a **per capita basis**.

### Performance of the Countries:

- **Norway**, which **tops the HDI**, **falls 15 places** if this metric is used, leaving **Ireland at the top** of the table.
- The **United States** (HDI Rank -17) and **Canada** (HDI Rank -16) **would fall 45 and 40 places** respectively, **reflecting their disproportionate impact on natural resources**.
- The **oil and gas-rich Gulf States** also fell steeply. **China would drop 16 places** from its current ranking of 85.

### India's Performance:

- India **would move up eight places** in the ranking.

- Under the **Paris Agreement**, India pledged to reduce the emission intensity of its GDP from the 2005 level by 33-35% by 2030 and to obtain 40% of electric power capacity from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030.
- **Solar capacity in India increased** from 2.6 gigawatts in March 2014 to 30 gigawatts in July 2019, achieving its target of 20 gigawatts four years ahead of schedule.
- In 2019, India **ranked fifth for installed solar capacity**.
- The **National Solar Mission** aims to promote solar energy for power generation and other uses to make solar energy competitive with fossil fuel-based options.

## Other Indices

### ▪ Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index:

- The IHDI indicates **percentage loss in HDI due to inequality**.
- For **India**, IHDI value for 2019 is **0.537 (16.8% overall loss)**.

### ▪ Gender Development Index:

- GDI **measures disparities on the HDI by gender**.
- For **India**, GDI value for 2019 is **0.820 (World: 0.943)**.

### ▪ Gender Inequality Index:

- GII presents a composite measure of gender inequality using **three dimensions**:
  - ❖ **Reproductive health,**
  - ❖ **Empowerment and**
  - ❖ **The labour market.**
- In GII, India is **at 123<sup>rd</sup> rank**. Last year, it was ranked 122<sup>nd</sup> out of 162 countries.

### ▪ Multidimensional Poverty Index:

- MPI captures the multiple deprivations that people in developing countries face in their health, education and standard of living.
- The most recent survey data publicly available for India's MPI estimation refer to 2015-2016. In India, **27.9% of the population** (3,77,492 thousand people) are **multidimensionally poor**, while an **additional 19.3%** are classified under **vulnerable to multidimensional poverty** (2,60,596 thousand people).

## Major Challenges:

- While the devastating effects of **Covid-19** have taken the world's attention, other layered crises, from **climate change to rising inequalities**, continue to take their toll.

The challenges of **planetary and societal imbalance** are intertwined: they interact in a vicious circle, each making the other worse.

➤ **Challenges Related to Children:**

- **Indigenous children** in Cambodia, India and Thailand show **more malnutrition-related issues** such as stunting and wasting.
- In **India**, different responses in parent behaviour as well as some disinvestment in girls' health and education have led to **higher malnutrition among girls than among boys** as a consequence of shocks likely linked to climate change.

➤ **Displacements in 2020:**

- **Disasters continued to trigger most new displacements** in 2020. **Cyclone Amphan** hit Bangladesh and India, driving the largest single displacement event in the first half of the year, triggering 3.3 million pre-emptive evacuations.

### **Suggestions & Solutions:**

- **Expanding human development** - more education of women and girls, more economic empowerment of women, more bargaining power of young girls in households, reduced poverty, etc.
- Evidence from Colombia to India indicates that **financial security and ownership of land improve women's security** and reduce the risk of gender-based violence, clearly indicating that **owning land can empower women**.

## **#UNEP'S EMISSIONS GAS REPORT 2020**

**United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)'s Emissions Gap Report 2020** has been published recently.

- The annual report from UNEP measures the gap between anticipated emissions and levels consistent with the **Paris Agreement** goals of limiting global warming this century to well below 2°C and pursuing 1.5°C.

### **Analysis for the year 2019:**

**Record high GreenHouse Gas (GHG) emissions:**

- Global GHG emissions continued to grow for the third consecutive year in 2019, reaching a record high of **52.4 Gigatonne carbon equivalent (GtCO<sub>2</sub>e) without including land use changes (LUC)**.
- There is some indication that the **growth in global GHG emissions is slowing**.
- However, GHG emissions are **declining in Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) economies** and **increasing in non-OECD economies**.



### Record carbon emission:

- Fossil **carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>)** emissions (from fossil fuels and carbonates) dominate **total GHG emissions**.
- Fossil CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reached a record **38.0 GtCO<sub>2</sub> in 2019**.

### Forest fires increasing GHG emissions:

- Since 2010, global GHG emissions have grown **1.4% per year on average**, with a more rapid increase of **2.6% in 2019** due to a large **increase in vegetation forest fires**.

### G20 countries account for bulk of emissions:

- Over the last decade, the **top four emitters (China, the United States of America, EU27+UK and India)** have contributed to **55% of the total GHG emissions without LUC**.
- The **top seven emitters** (including the Russian Federation, Japan and international transport) have contributed to 65%, with G20 members accounting for 78%.
- The ranking of countries changes when considering **per capita emissions**.

### On consumption-based emissions:

- There is a general tendency that **rich countries have higher consumption-based emissions** (emissions allocated to the country where goods are purchased and consumed, rather than where they are produced) than **territorial-based emissions**, as they typically have cleaner production, relatively more services and more imports of primary and secondary products.
- Both emission types have **declined at similar rates**.

### Impact of the Pandemic:

- **Emissions Level: CO<sub>2</sub> emissions** could **decrease by about 7% in 2020** compared with **2019 emission levels**, with a **smaller drop expected in GHG emissions** as **non-CO<sub>2</sub>** is likely to be less affected.
- The resulting atmospheric concentrations of GHGs such as **methane (CH<sub>4</sub>)** and **nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O)** **continued to increase in both 2019 and 2020**.

### Sector reporting the lowest dip in emission due to pandemic:

- The biggest changes have occurred in **transport**, as restrictions were targeted to **limit mobility**, though reductions have also occurred in other sectors.

### Issues and Possible Solutions:

- The world is still heading for a temperature rise in excess of **3°C this century**.
- The levels of ambition in the Paris Agreement still must be roughly **tripled for the 2°C pathway** and **increased at least fivefold for the 1.5°C Pathway**.
- Rise of 3°C in global temperatures **could cause catastrophic weather-related events** around the world.
- UN Experts believe the way to avoid it is encourage **green recovery** for countries facing Covid-induced economic slumps.
- A green recovery involves **investment in zero emissions tech and infrastructure, reducing fossil fuel subsidies, stopping new coal plants, and promoting nature-based solutions**, according to the UN.
- Such actions could cut 25% of predicted emissions by 2030, and gives the planet a 66% chance of keeping warming below the 2° mark that the Paris pact had set as a long term goal.

## #INDIA INNOVATION INDEX BY NITI AAYOG

The **NITI Aayog** is to launch the **second edition of India Innovation Index**. The Index ranks states of the country based on how they support innovation. The first edition of India Innovation Index was launched in 2019.



### About India Innovation Index

- The **India Innovation Index** was developed on the lines of Global Innovation Index. It attempts to create an extensive framework for the continuous evaluation of the **innovation environment of the states and union territories in India**.
- The index is calculated as the average of scores of two dimensions namely enablers and performance. The **enablers provide the innovative capacities** of the states and the performers give the benefits derived by the **nation from the state's innovation**.
- The enablers are **human capital, investment, business environment, knowledge workers and safety and legal environment**. The performance parameters are knowledge diffusion and knowledge output.

### Importance of India Innovation Index

- India **has huge opportunities and potential to become the innovation leader of the world**. The Innovation Index will act as an evaluator of innovation in the country.
- This will help to **channelize the improvement of innovation environment**. Also, it will promote competitive federalism among the states.

- **Karnataka emerged as the topper in overall rankings** in the category of major states in India Innovation Index, 2019. **Maharashtra** performed the best in the **dimension of Enablers**.
- **Sikkim** topped the ranking in **north eastern states** category and **Delhi** topped the list in the category of **Union Territories**.

### Conclusion

- There is a need to **improve the capability of top rung education institutions** in the country to produce greater innovation outputs.
- Also, the spending on **research and development** should be increased with greater collaboration between the **educational institutions and industries**. A collaborative platform with innovators, investors and researchers will strengthen **industry-academia linkages and will ease the technology transfer processes**.

## #DIGITAL PAYMENTS INDEX RELEASED BY RBI

The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has constructed a composite **Digital Payments Index (DPI)** to **capture the extent of digitisation of payments** across the country.

### About the Index:

- The RBI-DPI comprises **5 broad parameters** that enable **measurement of deepening and penetration of digital payments** in the country **over different time periods**.

#### 5 Parameters:

- Payment Enablers **(weight 25%)**,
- Payment Infrastructure – **Demand-side factors (10%)**,
- Payment Infrastructure– Supply-side factors **(15%)**,
- Payment Performance **(45%) and**
- Consumer Centricity **(5%)**.
- **It has been** constructed with March 2018 as the base period, **i.e. DPI score for March 2018 is set at 100**.
- **It will be** published on RBI's website on a semi-annual basis **from March 2021**

onwards with a lag of 4 months.

- Index Value for 2019 and 2020: **The DPI for March 2019 and March 2020 worked out to be 153.47 and 207.84 respectively, indicating appreciable growth.**

### Data Analysis:

- During the **second quarter (Q2) of 2020-21, Unified Payments Interface (UPI) payments** recorded an **82% jump in volume** and a **99% jump in value**, compared with the same quarter last year, according to the Worldline India Digital Payments report.
- In Q2, **19 banks joined the UPI ecosystem**, bringing the total number of banks providing UPI services to 174 as of September 2020 while the BHIM App **was available for customers of 146 banks.**
- In Q2, there were **over 51.8 lakhs Point of Sale (PoS) terminals** deployed by merchant acquiring banks, which is 13% higher than the same quarter of the previous year.
- A merchant acquiring **bank is a bank that processes payments on behalf of a merchant.** In 2018, the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) **ranked India seventh** among the 24 countries where it tracks digital payments.

### Recent Initiatives:

- The **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has recently given** approval to WhatsApp **to go live with UPI** in a graded manner, starting with a maximum registered user base of 2 crores.
- The NPCI has also **issued a cap of 30% of the total volume of transactions processed in UPI**, which is applicable to all Third-Party App Providers (TPAPs) and is effective from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021.
- The RBI has created a **Payments Infrastructure Development Fund (PIDF)** to encourage acquirers to deploy Points of Sale (PoS) infrastructure — both physical and digital modes — in tier-3 to tier-6 centres and north eastern states.

### RBI's Other Publications

- **Consumer Confidence Survey (CCS - Quarterly)**
- **Inflation Expectations Survey of Households (IESH - Quarterly)**
- **Financial Stability Report (Half-Yearly)**
- **Monetary Policy Report (Half-Yearly)**
- **Report on Foreign Exchange Reserves (Half-Yearly)**

## #FAO'S FOOD PRICE INDEX 2020

The **Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) food price index** averaged **107.5 points** in **December 2020**, up **2.3 points** from November 2020. This marks the **seventh month of consecutive increase**.



### About the Index:

- It was **introduced in 1996** as a public good to help in monitoring developments in the **global agricultural commodity markets**.
- **The FAO Food Price Index (FFPI) is a measure of the monthly change in international prices of a basket of food commodities.**
- It measures changes for a **basket of cereals, oilseeds, dairy products, meat and sugar**.
- **Base Period:** 2014-16.

### About the Food and Agriculture Organization:

- FAO is a **specialized agency of the** United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger.
- **World Food Day** is celebrated every year around the world on **16<sup>th</sup> October**. The day is celebrated to mark the **anniversary of the founding of the FAO in 1945**.
- **India** released a **commemorative coin of Rs. 75 denomination** to mark the **75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the FAO** (16<sup>th</sup> October 2020).
- It is **one of the UN food aid organisations based in Rome (Italy)**. Its sister bodies are the **World Food Programme** and the **International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)**.

### Initiatives Taken:

- **Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS).**
- Monitors the Desert Locust **situation** throughout the world.
- The **Codex Alimentarius Commission or CAC** is the body responsible for all matters regarding the implementation of the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme.
- The **International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture** was adopted by the Thirty-First Session of the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization in 2001.

### Flagship Publications:



- **The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA).**
- **The State of the World's Forests (SOFO).**
- The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI).
- **The State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA).**
- **The State of Agricultural Commodity Markets (SOCO).**

## #INDIA RANKED 4<sup>TH</sup> IN GLOBAL FIREPOWER INDEX

- The **Global Firepower Index** ranks the countries based on their **potential military strength**. India was **ranked fourth in the index**. The Global Firepower Index ranked **138 countries**.
- The countries were evaluated based on **prolonged offensive and defensive military campaigns**.



### Rankings in the index

- The **United States topped the index with 904 attack helicopters** and eleven aircraft carriers. Also, the country has **sixty-eight submarines and 40,000 armoured fighting vehicles**.
- The **US was followed by Russia with 189 fighter aircrafts** and 538 attack helicopters. Russia has 13,000 tanks and 64 submarines.
- **China was ranked third with 1,200 combat aircrafts and 327** attack helicopters and seventy-nine submarines. Also, China has 35,000 armoured vehicles.
- **India was ranked fourth in the Global Firepower Index with 542 combat aircraft, 17 submarines, 4,730 tanks and 37 attack helicopters.**
- **Japan was ranked fifth** in the Global Firepower Index with **2 helicopter carriers, 27** destroyers. **South Korea was ranked sixth** in the world and North Korea was ranked 28<sup>th</sup>.

### About Global Firepower Index, 2021

- The **Global Firepower Index** is calculated **using fifty individual factors** from geography to logistical capability. It also includes **manpower, land forces, airpower, natural resources, naval forces, logistics and financials**.

- Under manpower, the factors considered are total population, paramilitary, reaching military age annually, active reserves and active services.
- **Under equipment, the factors considered** are trainer fleet, aircraft fleet strength, helicopter fleet, attack fleets, rocket projectors, tank strength, towed artillery, aircraft carriers, naval fleet strength, destroyers, submarines, coastal patrol craft, frigates, mine warfare craft, coastal patrol craft and tanker fleets. The finance factors include external debt, defence budget, reserves of foreign exchange and gold and purchasing power parity.

## Position of Pakistan

- **Pakistan was ranked the tenth most powerful country** in the Global Firepower Index. Pakistan has surpassed **Israel, Indonesia, Iran and Canada in terms of military power.**

## #INDIA RANKED 85<sup>TH</sup> HENLEY PASSPORT INDEX

The **Henley Passport Index** was launched by the **International Air Transport Association**. Around 227 different travel destinations are considered to launch the index. The index is released based on the number of destinations the holders can access without visa.

### Henley Passport Index 2021

- **Nepal at rank 104 and Pakistan at 107** continue to be the **"Worst passports to hold" category. Pakistan had a visa-free score of 32 countries** and Nepal had a score of 38 countries.

The **International Air Transport Association** is a trade association of the world's airlines founded in 1945. IATA has been described as a cartel since, in addition to setting technical standards for airlines, IATA also organized tariff conferences that served as a forum for price fixing. Consisting in 2016 of 290 airlines, primarily major carriers, **representing 117 countries, the IATA's member airlines** account for carrying approximately 82% of total available seat miles air traffic. **IATA supports airline**

**activity** and helps formulate

- The countries such as **Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria** were the countries with the **worst passport to hold with a score of 26, 28 and 29.**
- The report said that **Japanese citizens can travel to 191 countries and Japan was the top performer.**
- Singapore was in second position with a score of 190. **South Korea and Germany were at third position with a score of 189.**
- Countries such as **UK, USA, New Zealand and Switzerland** were at the seventh position. They are considered as the most powerful passports in the world. Their score was 185. Australia was at eighth position with a score of 184.
- **India ranked 85<sup>th</sup> in the Henley Passport Index.** India scored **58 in the Henley Passport Index.**

### What is new about Henley Passport Index, 2021?

- Over the past sixteen years, the top positions of Henley Passport Index were taken by the **European Union countries, USA and UK.** This year, the Asia Pacific countries have become the top performers.
- **Passport Index:** The Passport Index is an online tool. It provides insights about visa-free travel option. The Passport Index includes **World Openness score, Visa-free scores and Global mobility scores.**
- **Visa free destinations:** There are 58 destinations in the world that does not require prior visa. Of **these twenty are in Africa and eleven are in Asia.**

### #INEQUALITIES VIRUS REPORT: OXFAM INT.

Recently, the **Inequality Virus Report**, released by **Oxfam International**, has found that the **Covid pandemic** deeply **increased the existing inequalities** in India and around the world.

- The report states that **Covid has the potential to increase economic inequality** in almost every country at once - the first time this has happened since records began over a century ago.

### Impact of the Pandemic on Rich vis-a-vis Poor:

- **India introduced one of the earliest and most stringent** lockdowns in the face of the pandemic and its enforcement **brought the economy to a standstill, triggering** unemployment, hunger, distress migration **and untold hardship** in its wake.

- The **rich were able to escape** the pandemic's worst impact; and while the **white-collar workers isolated themselves and worked from home**, a **majority of the not-so-fortunate Indians lost their livelihood**.
- The **wealth of Indian billionaires increased by 35%** during the lockdown and by 90% since 2009 to USD 422.9 billion, **ranking India sixth in the world after the USA, China, Germany, Russia and France**.

### Impact on Informal Sector:

- India's large informal workforce **was the worst hit** as it made up 75% of the **122 million jobs lost**.
- Informal workers had relatively **fewer opportunities to work from home and suffered more job loss** compared to the formal sector.
- The 40-50 million **seasonal migrant workers**, typically engaged working in construction sites, factories etc. were **particularly distressed**.

### Impact on Education:

- Over the past year as **education shifted online**, India saw the digital divide **worsening inequalities**.
- On the one hand, **private providers experienced exponential growth** yet, on the other, just **3% of the poorest 20% of Indian households had access to a computer and just 9% had access to the internet**.
- It noted that **the long disruption of schooling risked doubling the rate of out of school**, especially among the poor.

### Health Inequalities:

- Oxfam found that since India does not report case data desegregated by socio-economic or social categories, it is **difficult to gauge the distribution of the disease amongst various communities**.
- India currently has the **world's second-largest cumulative number of Covid-19 positive cases** and globally, the poor, marginalised and vulnerable communities have higher rates of Covid-19 prevalence.
- The **spread of disease was swift among poor communities**, often living in cramped areas with poor sanitation and using shared common facilities such as toilets and water points.

### Sanitation Facility:

- **Only 6% of the poorest 20% households had access to non-shared sources of improved sanitation**, compared to 93% of the top 20% households in India.

- In terms of caste, **just 37.2% of Scheduled Castes (SCs) households and 25.9% of Scheduled Tribes (STs) households had access to non-shared sanitation facilities**, compared to 65.7% for the general population.

### Gender Disparities:

- **Employment:** The **unemployment rate among women** rose from already high **15% before Covid to 18%**. This increase in unemployment of women **can result in a loss to India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of about 8% or USD 218 billion**. Of the women who retained their jobs, as many **83% were subjected to a cut in income according to a survey by the Institute of Social Studies Trust**.
- **Health:** Beyond income and job losses, **poorer women also suffered healthwise because of the disruption in regular health services and Anganwadi centres**. It is predicted that the **closure of family planning services** will result in 2.95 million unintended pregnancies, 1.80 million abortions (including 1.04 million unsafe abortions) and 2,165 maternal deaths.
- **Domestic Violence:** The **pandemic also fueled domestic violence against women**. As of November 2020, cases of domestic violence rose by almost 60% over the past 12 months.

### Suggestions & Solutions

- There is an urgent need for policymakers to **tax the wealthy individuals and rich corporates and use that money to invest in free quality public services and social protection** to support everyone, from cradle to grave.
- Reducing inequalities is very important but it should be a medium-term target. Between growth and distribution, India must get the sequencing right.
- India **needs to grow first before it can distribute**. Otherwise, it can get stuck in a low-income equilibrium.

## #GLOBAL CLIMATE RISK INDEX BY GERMANWATCH

The **Global Climate Risk Index** was recently released by **Germanwatch-a NGO based in Bonn, Germany**. In the index, **India has been ranked at seventh position** among the countries that are most effected by climate change in 2019.

### Key Findings of the report

- As per the report, **monsoon continued for a month longer than normal in India in the year 2019**. In the period of June to September 2019, 110% of the long-period average was recorded.





- Heavy rain caused the **severe flooding in India that resulted into death of 1,800 across 14 states**. The flood also caused the displacement of 1.8 million people.
- As per the report, **eight tropical cyclones came in India**. Six of them **intensified to be very severe**. Report further highlights that, '**Extremely severe**' cyclone Fani affected 28 million people and killed 90 people in India and Bangladesh.
- Around **4,75,000 people have lost their lives as a direct result of more than 11,000 extreme weather events** globally in between the 2000 to 2019.
- For the period of 2000 to 2014, the economic losses in terms of purchasing power parity accounts to around US \$2.56 trillion because of extreme weather conditions.
- The report also highlights that, **around 11.8 million people were affected by intense monsoon globally** that in turn resulted into economic damage of US \$10 billion.

### The Global Climate Risk Index (CRI)

- The **Global Climate Risk Index** is annually **published by the Germanwatch**. The index analyses the impact of extreme climate events on the country and the economy.
- It analyses **how countries have been affected by the impacts of weather-related loss events**. The index is prepared on the basis of data from **Munich Re's NatCatSERVICE**.

### Germanwatch : A non-governmental organization

- **Germanwatch** (founded in 1991), usually called **Germanwatch**, is a non-profit, non-governmental organization **based in Bonn, Germany**. It seeks to influence public policy on trade, the environment, and relations between countries in the industrialized north and underdeveloped south.
- The organization collates a variety of economic and social data to formulate position papers, often in partnership with other NGOs. Particular areas of interest include trade in food and agricultural policy, climate change, and corporate accountability.
- The Climate Change Performance Index (**CCPI**) is the other annual publication by **Germanwatch**, the NewClimate Institute, and Climate Action Network International. It evaluates the climate protection performance of **56 countries and the EU, responsible for over 90% of global greenhouse gas emissions**.
- Since the CCPI 2018, the CCPI takes into account greenhouse gas emissions (40%), renewable energy (20%), energy use (20%), and climate policy (20%). The climate policy evaluation is unique for the CCPI and consults around 400 experts regarding national and international climate policy performance.

- In the most recent **CCPI 2019**, no country has performed well enough to reach one of the top three places. The fourth rank is occupied by Sweden.

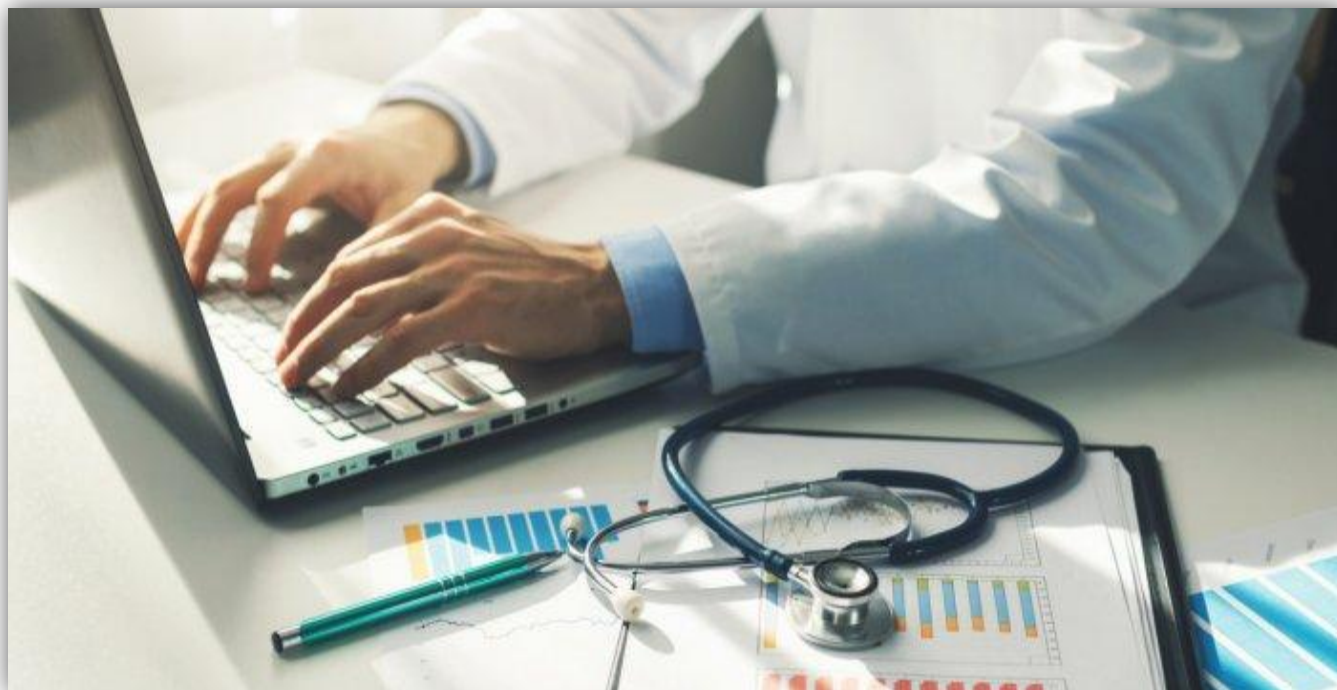
## #ASIA PACIFIC PERSONALIZED HEALTH INDEX

**Asia-Pacific Personalised Health Index** was recently released by the **Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)**. The index measures the readiness in adopting the **personalised healthcare of 11 health systems in the Asia-Pacific region**.

### Asia-Pacific Personalised Health Index

- This is a **newly launched index**. It measures the progress of a health system towards personalised healthcare.
- It evaluated the **11 health systems in the Asia-Pacific region**.

- The health systems that were evaluated includes: India, **China, Singapore, Australia,**



**Malaysia, Taiwan, Japan, Thailand, Indonesia, South Korea, and New Zealand.**

- It measured the performance **across 27 indicators of the personalised health** across 4 categories that are called as the '**Vital Signs**'.
- The four vital signs include **Policy Context, Health Information, Personalised Technologies and Health Services.**

### Key Findings of the report

- Report highlights that **Singapore was the best performer** among all the 11 health systems.
- Taiwan bagged the second position while Japan, and Australia stands at the third and the fourth position of the index respectively.
- **India was ranked at 10<sup>th</sup> position out of 11 health systems.**
- Indonesia was ranked last at **11<sup>th</sup>**

### India's rank

- Though, India **was ranked at 10<sup>th</sup> position overall.** But in the four vital categories **India's rank is- 10<sup>th</sup> in the health information indicator, 11<sup>th</sup> in the health services, 9<sup>th</sup> in the Personalised Technologies indicator while 5<sup>th</sup> in the Policy Context indicator.**

### Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)

- It is the research and analysis division of Economist Group. It provides the forecasting and advisory services by doing research and analysis.

- It provides- five-year country economic forecasts, monthly country reports, country risk service reports and industry reports. It has several offices **across the world including two offices in China and one in Hong Kong.**

## #COVID-19 RESPONSE INDEX

The **Covid-19 Response Index** was provided by **Sydney-based Lowy Institute, recently.** The study was based on the number of key indicators such as confirmed cases, cases per million people, deaths and deaths per million people.

### Key findings of the index

- India **was ranked 86th in a coronavirus performance index** among the **98 countries.**
- Report highlights that, **New Zealand handled the pandemic more effectively** than any other country across the world. Brazil was ranked at the bottom of the list. In the index, **New Zealand was followed by Vietnam, Taiwan, Thailand and Cyprus.**
- **US was ranked as the fifth-worst performing country.** Sri Lanka was placed at 10th position in handling the **Covid-19 pandemic.** The report further reveals that, the smaller populations, cohesive societies and capable institutions were big factors to successfully deal with the pandemic.
- China was not included in the study since its **testing rates are not publicly available.**
- **India has so far reported 1.07 crore infections** and 1,53,847 deaths – one of the world's lowest fatality rates from the disease, attributed partly to its younger population.



### About the Index

- The indicators used for ranking the countries point out that how well or poorly countries have managed the pandemic. An average of the rankings was given across the six indicators.
- Then it was normalised for each country so as to produce a score **between 0 for the worst performing and 100 for best performing.** The study was conducted for 36 weeks.

### The Lowy Institute

- It is **an independent think tank that was founded in April 2003.** It was founded by **Frank Lowy.** The think tank is involved in conducting the original, policy-relevant research about the international political, strategic and economic issues.

- The institute is based in **Sydney, Australia**. The institute is funded by donations from the **investment management firm, Manikay Partners**.

## #RELIANCE JIO 5<sup>TH</sup> STRONGEST BRAND GLOBALLY

- The **Reliance Jio** venture of **billionaire Mukesh Ambani** has become **the fifth strongest brand globally**. It now stands behind the brands like Ferrari and Coca-Cola. This venture has achieved this milestone in just four-odd-years.



### Key points about the report

- This ranking has been provided by the **"Brand Finance Global 500 ranking 2021"** of the strongest brands. This ranking determines the relative strength of brands.
- As per the annual report on most valuable and strongest global brands has been topped **by WeChat**. The **Reliance Jio was founded in 2016** and has become the largest mobile network operator in India. It has also become the third-largest mobile network operator in the world.
- The **network operator has almost 400 million subscribers, as of now**. The brand **Ferrari is ranked second, Russian bank Sber is ranked third** while Coca-Cola is ranked fourth.
- **Reliance Jio** has got the BSI score of 91.7 out of 100 and is given **elite AAA+ brand strength rating**.

### How this ranking was decided?

- The assessment of stakeholder equity was done through the original market research data. The **data was analysed for over 50,000 respondents in 30 countries and across 20 sectors**.

### Reliance Jio

- It is **an Indian telecommunications company and a subsidiary of Jio Platforms**. It is headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra. The company operates a national LTE network and is covering all the 22 telecom circles. The operator does not provide 2G or 3G service.
- It only uses voice over **LTE to provide the voice service on its 4G network**. It was launched in December 2015 with a beta for partners and employees. In September 2016 it was launched for public. Jio also launched a fiber to the **home service which offers broadband, television, and telephone services**.



- **Brand Finance:** It is an independent branded business valuation consultancy that advises branded organizations on how to maximize their value through effective management.

## #2020 WORST YEAR ON RECORD: UNWTO

- The **UN World Tourism Organization** recently confirmed the **Year 2020** as the '**worst year on record**', after global tourism suffered massively due to international travel bans implemented to contain the COVID-19 outbreak.
- The **international arrivals dropped by 74 percent** and destinations **across the world welcomed 1 billion fewer international arrivals than 2019** due to widespread travel restrictions and unprecedented fall in demand.



- As per the latest report by the **UN World Tourism Organization**, the collapse in international travel has represented an **estimated loss of USD 1.3 trillion in export revenues**, which is more than 11 times the loss recorded during the 2009 global economic crisis.

## Report of UNWTO

- The **UNWTO report noted that the COVID-19 crisis has put almost 100-120 million direct tourism jobs at risk**, many of them in small and medium-sized enterprises.
- The report further stated that due to the evolving nature of the pandemic, many countries are now reintroducing stricter travel restrictions.
- The **restrictions include quarantine rules, mandatory testing and complete closure of**

**borders** in some cases. At the same time, the report noted that the gradual rollout of a COVID-19 vaccine is expected to help restore consumer confidence and contribute to the easing travel restrictions, slowly leading normalisation of travel during the year ahead.

### Tourism rebound in 2021?

- The **UNWTO Panel of Experts survey displays a mixed outlook for 2021**. Almost half of the respondents (45%) had envisaged better prospects for 2021 in comparison to last year and 25 per cent expect similar performance and 30 per cent foresee worsening of results in 2021.
- Overall, the **prospects of tourism rebound in 2021 look to have worsened**. At **least 50 percent** of respondents **expect a rebound only in 2022 as compared to 21 per cent** in October 2020. The remaining still see a potential rebound in 2021.
- According to **UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili**, while much has been done to make safe international travel a possibility, we are aware that the crisis is far from over. He stated that the coordination, and digitalization of **COVID-19 travel-related risk reduction measures**, including testing, tracing and vaccination certificates, are essential foundations to promote safe travel and prepare for the **recovery of tourism once conditions allow.**"