

## 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2021 Current Affairs

### 1. World Talent Ranking report:



Recently, IMD World Competitive Centre has published its “World Talent Ranking Report”.

#### Salient Points:

This report is published by the IMD World Competitive Centre every year.

The Report grades 64 economies on the basis of a range of factors like:

1. How economies invest in and develop local personnel?
2. Their ability to attract & retain skilled workers.
3. Quality of domestic talent pools.

#### Key Facts of the report:

- In the report, Europe has dominated the ranking in 2021. Global top 10 countries are from this region.
- Switzerland has retained its top spot again.
- The UAE continually have improved its global talent ranking. Ranking has improved by one position to 23rd. In 2019, it was ranked at 30<sup>th</sup>.
- In the Arab world, UAE has maintained its top position.
- In the Middle East & North Africa, UAE maintained its second position, after Israel (first in this region).
- Israel has been ranked at 22nd.
- Taiwan has been ranked at 3rd place in Asia while at 16th place overall. Its ranking has improved by four places as compared to 2020.

### How the Ranking is structured?

The ranking is designed based on three factors:

1. Investment and development
2. Appeal - It assesses the extent to which a country attracts local and foreign talent.
3. Readiness - This factor determines the quality of skills and competencies available in a country.

### About International Institute for Management Development (IMD):

IMD is an independent academic institution which is having Swiss roots and global reach. It was founded 75 years ago for business leaders by business leaders. It has been a pioneering force in developing leaders who can transform the organizations and contribute to society.

### 2. UNICEF India will roll out five-year plan:



UNICEF India is about to design an ambitious and innovative five-year programme, comprising of social policy as a priority across all the sectors.

#### Salient Points:

While designing this new programme, UNICEF desired to talk with all the stakeholders and get details on how what could be done better in the new environment post COVID-19 and where climate change was the main priority.

Covid-19 and climate change had exacerbated the learning crisis. Around 286 million children had been affected in India. This number excluded the millions out of school because of various reasons.

### **Status of Digital divide in India:**

Kerala had made digital learning attainable. However, it was not case in other States having a digital divide. Digital divide was a new kind of hardship. Furthermore, in a study of climate effects on children, India had been ranked at fifth place with respect to vulnerability to climate change.

### **UNICEF's vision:**

Overall vision of the UNICEF on social protection was for children to have access to inclusive social protection programmes and live free from poverty. For instance, government's cash grants to children who lost their parents due to COVID-19.

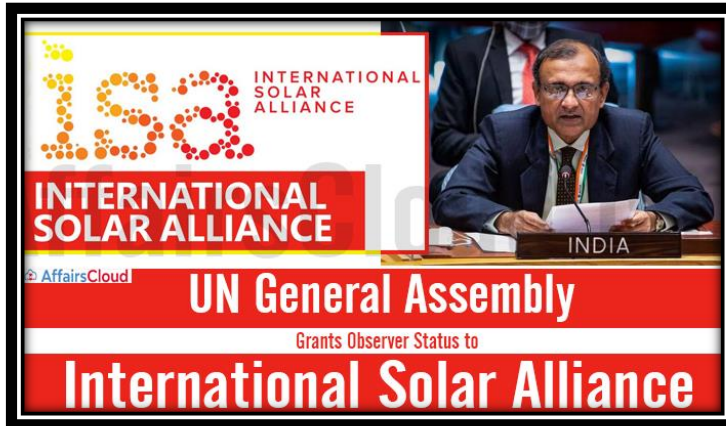
### **Local Governance Initiative for Children:**

- UNICEF also seeks to launch 'child and young friendly local governance initiatives' that can put children and adolescents at the centre and enable them to raise their voice about what made a difference to their lives.
- Such initiatives were required not only in rural areas but in cities too where there was a lot of vulnerability and urban poverty.
- Kerala had already launched child-friendly local governance initiatives, that other states also wanted to initiate. Government officials had held several talks to build on the Kerala model and extend it for children aged between 10- to 19-year-old.

### **Pillars of New Country Programme:**

One of the prime pillars of new country programme will be evidence-based planning. It will be done in partnership with centres of excellence in order to use reports and studies effectively. The large number of social security programmes will be reviewed and consolidated while few schemes would be prioritised for better coverage.

### 3. UNGA has granted Observer Status to International Solar Alliance:



Recently, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has granted Observer Status to International Solar Alliance (ISA).

#### Salient Points:

It is a historic decision and ISA has become an example of positive global climate action through partnerships in order to benefit global energy growth & development.

#### About the Fourth General Assembly of ISA:

The fourth general assembly of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) was held in October 2021. In that event total 108 countries had participated, including 74 member countries and 34 observer & prospective countries had participated. Apart from that, 23 partner organisations and 33 special invitee organisations also participated.

#### What is International Solar Alliance (ISA)?

- ISA is a coalition of 124 countries. This initiative was taken by India. Most of these countries are sunshine countries.
- These countries are situated either completely or partly between Tropic of Cancer and Tropic of Capricorn.
- ISA was established with the aim of working for efficient consumption of solar energy in a bid to reduce dependence on fossil fuels.
- ISA was first proposed by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2015 at Wembley Stadium. During the speech, he addressed sunshine countries as Suryaputra that is "Sons of the Sun".
- It is a treaty-based inter-governmental organization.

- After the United Nations, ISA is the largest coalition of states world-wide.

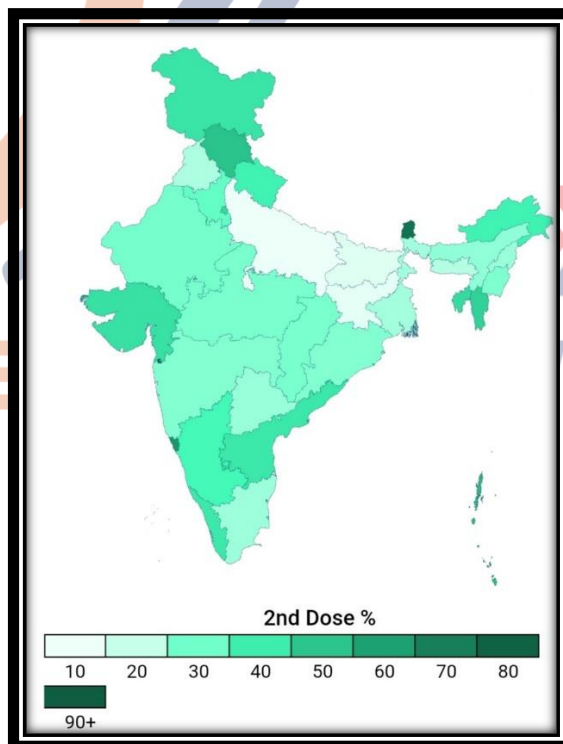
### Members of the ISA:

Most of the members of ISA are countries situated around tropics. However, countries that do not fall within the Tropics can also join the alliance and avail all benefits as other members. Though, they would not get voting rights.

### About United Nations General Assembly (UNGA):

UNGA is one among the six principal wings of the United Nations (UN). It serves as the main policymaking, deliberative, and representative organ of the UN. The powers, functions, composition, and procedures of UNGA are mentioned in Chapter IV of the United Nations Charter.

4. In WEF Survey it is found that Indians support vaccine, mask mandate for workplace:



Recently, a global World Economic Forum (WEF) survey has shown that, around 90 % people in India believe they & their colleagues at workplaces should be fully vaccinated while 93 per cent Indians agreed that they should wear mask at public places or in proximity with others, in order to be safe from covid-19.

### **Salient Points:**

- The percentage of respondents from India, agreeing to such **measures is much greater than** the global average.
- On an average, across the globe, **78 % people** want everyone in their workplace to be fully vaccinated while **81 % people are** expecting everyone to wear a mask at public places.
- On an average, around **62 % people across** the globe would not feel comfortable going to work if such measures were not in place.
- The survey was conducted on **14,500 employed adults across 33 countries** between October 22 and November 5, 2021.
- **81 % of Indians respondents** said that; they would go for frequent Covid testing if they are not vaccinated against the disease.
- The **12 % of workers across** the globe would opt for frequent testing instead.
- WEF survey also highlighted that, there are wide differences in Covid and workplace-related behaviour and attitudes across the globe.

### **Most Supporting Countries:**

Support for mask-wearing mandates, testing and vaccination is seen highest in Eastern Asia, Southern Asia, Latin America and Saudi Arabia. While lowest is seen in Central Europe, Northern Europe, Eastern Europe, and United States.

### **Countries where workers feel comfortability:**

Among all the surveyed countries, the majority of workers are still comfortable going to work in case no protective mandates were in place across seven states namely, Poland, Russia, Hungary, Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland, and the US. In China, only **12 % workers would be comfortable in this scenario while 18 per cent would quit their job or work remotely instead.**

5. **MIS portal for rankings of States & UTs in Land Acquisition Projects has been launched:**



Recently, Union Minister for Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Giriraj Singh, has launched MIS (Management Information System) portal to rank States/UTs in Land Acquisition Projects.

**Salient Points:**

- Because of the launching of this portal, states/UTs will be ranked in Land Acquisition Projects under RFCTLARR Act, 2013, which is dubbed as “Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013”.
- Based on the ranking and performance, the top 3 States and top 3 districts will be honored.

**Merits of the portal:**

MIS portal is being named as a ‘Vikas Portal’. The Portal will not only show data and figures but also the speed of development in India. It is a result of the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to provide impetus to the Gati Shakti Mission.

**Demerits of delayed implementation:**

Delayed implementation of the projects in India increases the project cost as well as disturb the rapidity of development. This portal will help in mitigating this concern. Because of ranking available to all the States, it will be easier to monitor the progress of developmental projects. This in turn will increase the speed of projects.

**Which department has developed this MIS Portal?**

This MIS portal has been developed by the Department of Land Resources. It is a software-driven program for submitting information by respective State/UTs on land acquisition on developmental projects. It was developed in house by the NIC team of the land resource department with zero cost. The Link of the portal is "[larr.dolr.gov.in](http://larr.dolr.gov.in)."

### **Why MIS portal has been launched?**

This MIS portal was launched to capture information on several parameters of land acquisition, which are necessary to have a proper ranking of the State/UTs.

### **6. F1 champion Lewis Hamilton has received knighthood:**



Recently, seven times Formula One (F1) champion Lewis Hamilton has received "knighthood" for his services to motorsport.

### **Important Facts:**

- He received knighthood, days after he lost at the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix. He had lost out to Red Bull driver Max Verstappen.
- Lewis Hamilton holds the record of most race wins.
- There are total 103 wins of Lewis Hamilton.
- He is tied with Michael Schumacher from Germany, on seven drivers' championships.
- Hamilton has become the fourth F1 driver to be knighted.
- Before him, late Australian Jack Brabham, Stirling Moss and triple champion Jackie Stewart have been knighted.



- However, Lewis Hamilton is the one and only to have received this award while still racing.

### **Sportsmen who received Knighthood:**

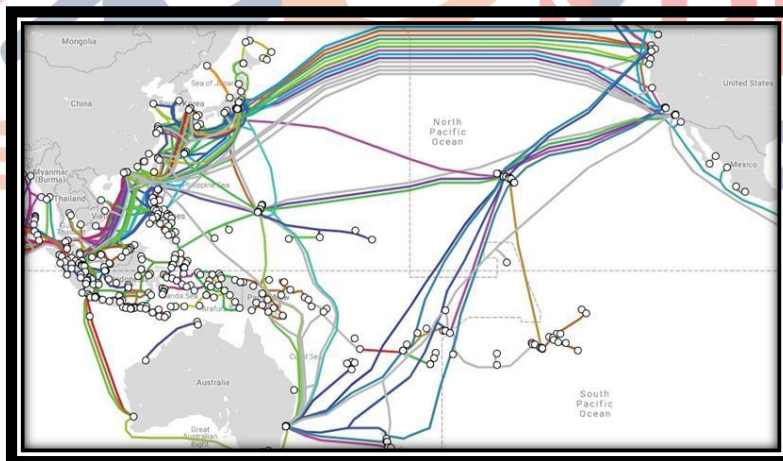
The list of other sportsmen who have received a knighthood:

1. Cycling's Tour de France winner Bradley Wiggins.
2. Olympic 5,000 & 10,000 metres gold medallist Mo Farah.
3. Two times Wimbledon champion Andy Murray.
4. England cricketer Alastair Cook.

### **About Sir Lewis Carl Davidson Hamilton:**

He is a British racing driver, presently competing in Formula One for Mercedes. He has previously driven for McLaren in between 2007 to 2012. He won a joint-record seven World Drivers' Championship titles in F1 and holds the records for most wins (103), podium finishes (182) and pole positions (103). In 2020 issue of Time, he was listed as one of the 100 most influential people. He was recently knighted in 2021 New Year Honours.

### **7. US, Australia, Japan will jointly fund undersea cable in Pacific:**



Western Allies namely, the United States, Australia and Japan have recently announced to jointly fund the construction of an undersea cable in the Pacific Ocean.

### **Salient Points:**

- The undersea cable in the Pacific will be used to magnify internet access in three small Pacific countries, since the Western allies seek to counter increasing Chinese influence in this region.
- Allies will develop the cable for providing faster internet to Kiribati, Nauru, and the Federated States of Micronesia.
- This service will support in increasing the economic growth, helping in improving living standards and driving development opportunities, as the region is recovering from harsh impacts of COVID-19.
- But the cost of the project is not yet specified.
- In 2017, Australia have spent around 137 million Australian dollars to develop better internet access in Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea.

### **Background:**

Development of undersea cable is the newest funding commitment of Western allies in telecommunications sector of the Pacific.

### **Why this project was launched?**

Western allies have launched this project as the US and its Indo-Pacific allies are of the views that cables laid by China might compromise regional security. Though, China has denied any plan to use commercial fibre-optic cables for spying. These fibre-optic cables have more data capacity than satellites.

### **What is Submarine Communications Cable?**

A submarine communications cable is laid on sea bed in between land-based stations in a bid to carry telecommunication signals all over the ocean & sea stretches. First ever submarine communications cables were laid in 1850s to carry telegraphy traffic. It had established the first immediate telecommunications ties between continents. Subsequent generations of cables carried telephone traffic, followed by data communications traffic. Modern cables use optical fibre technology in a bid to carry digital data, including internet, telephone and private data traffic.