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News: Human Development Report (HDR)

- According to the 2023-24 Human Development Report (HDR), titled ‘Breaking the Gridlock: Reimagining Cooperation in a Polarised World,’ India ranks 134 on the global Human Development Index (HDI). Switzerland has been ranked number one.

Human Development Report (HDR) 2023 – 24

Performer

- Top Three Countries (Scores): **Switzerland (0.967), Norway (0.966) and Iceland (0.959).**
- **Bottom Three Countries: Somalia (0.380), South Sudan (0.381), and Central African Republic (0.387).**
- **Bigger Economies: USA (0.927), UK (0.889), Japan (0.878), Russia (0.821).**
- **Countries Not Ranked in Index: The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (North Korea) and Monaco.**



Unprecedented Levels of Growth Disparity

- The rich countries experienced unprecedented development. But half of the world's poorest nations continued to languish below their pre-Covid-19 crisis levels.
- The two-decade trend of steadily reducing inequalities between wealthy and poor nations is now in reverse.
- While HDI is projected to reach record highs in 2023 after declines in 2020 and 2021, there is a stark contrast in development levels between rich and poor nations.

Democracy Paradox

- There is an emerging “democracy paradox”, with most of those surveyed expressing support for democracy but also endorsing leaders who may undermine democratic principles.
- This paradox, coupled with a sense of powerlessness and a lack of control over government decisions, has fuelled political polarisation and inward-looking policy approaches.

Global Inequalities and Widening Human Development Gap

- Global inequalities have been compounded by substantial economic concentration – almost 40% of global trade in goods is concentrated in three or fewer countries.
- In 2021, the market capitalisation of each of the three largest tech companies in the world surpassed the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of more than 90% of countries that year, the report said.

Indian Overview

- Performance at Various Indicators: India's average life expectancy reached 67.7 years in 2022, up from 62.7 years the previous year.
- India's Gross National Income (GNI) per capita has surged to USD 6951, marking a 6.3% increase over the span of 12 months.
- There is a rise in expected years of schooling, reaching 12.6 per individual.
- HDI Score: India attained an HDI score of 0.644 in 2022, positioning it at 134 out of 193 countries in the UN's 2023-24 report.
- This categorises India under 'medium human development'.
- With India's HDI in 1990 standing at 0.434, the 2022 score reflects a positive change of 48.4%.

Notable Achievements

- There is a 9.1-year increase in life expectancy at birth, a rise of 4.6 years in expected years of schooling, and an increase of 3.8 years in mean years of schooling.
- India's strides in reducing gender inequality highlighted a Gender Inequality Index (GII) of 0.437, surpassing the global average.
- On the GII 2022 list, which evaluates countries based on reproductive health, empowerment, and labour market participation, India ranks 108 out of 166 nations in 2022.

Performance of India's Neighbours

- Sri Lanka has been ranked much ahead at 78, while China is ranked 75, both categorised under the High Human Development category.
- India also ranks below Bhutan which stands at 125 and Bangladesh, which is in the 129th position. India, Bhutan and Bangladesh are all in the Medium Human Development category.
- Nepal (146) and Pakistan (164) have been ranked lower than India.