

# **Henley Passport Index 2023**

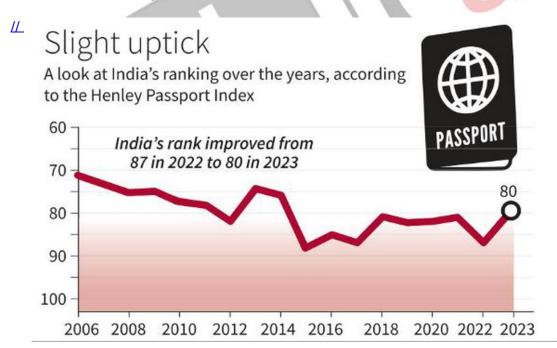
### **Source: TH**

## Why in News?

In the latest <u>Henley Passport Index</u> **2023**, Indian passport has climbed seven places to **secure the 80<sup>th</sup> rank**, up from 87th in 2022, giving its holders visa free access to **57 countries**.

## What is Henley Passport Index?

- About:
  - The Henley Passport Index is a ranking system that evaluates all the world's passports based on the number of travel destinations their holders can access without the need for a prior visa.
    - This index encompasses 199 different passports and covers 227 travel destinations.
  - It is compiled and **published by Henley & Partners**, a global citizenship and residence advisory firm.
- India's Passport Performance Over the Years:



### Global Rankings and Shifts:

- Top Position: <u>Singapore</u> now holds the most powerful passport in the world, granting its citizens visa-free access to an impressive **192 travel destinations out of 227** worldwide.
  - Japan previously held the top spot on the Henley Passport Index for five years.

- Runners-up: Germany, Italy, and Spain share the second position on the index.
  - Japan, along with Austria, Finland, France, Luxembourg, South Korea, and Sweden, shares the third spot.
- **Decline of the United States:** Over the past decade, the United States has experienced a steady decline on the index, **falling two places to the eighth spot.**
- Henley Openness Index:
  - About:
    - Henley & Partners also introduced the **Henley Openness Index**, which measures the number of nations a country allows visa-free access to.
    - In this ranking, India was placed 94<sup>th</sup> out of 97 countries, offering visa-free access to only four nations.
  - Most Open Countries: The top 20 'most open' countries predominantly comprise small island nations and African states, with the exception of Cambodia.
    - 12 countries offer exceptional openness, providing **visa-free or visa-on-arrival entry** to all 198 passports in the world (excluding their own).
    - These countries are Burundi, Comoro Islands, Djibouti, Guinea-Bissau, Maldives, Micronesia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Samoa, Seychelles, Timor-Leste, and Tuvalu.
  - Least Open Countries: Afghanistan, North Korea, Papua New Guinea, and Turkmenistan were ranked at the bottom of the Henley Openness Index, as they do not permit visa-free access for any passport holders.

## **Visa-Free Access V/s Visa on Arrival**

- Visa-Free Access: Visa-free access means that citizens of certain countries can enter another country without the need to obtain a visa in advance.
  - They are allowed to stay for a specified period, usually determined by bilateral agreements or international treaties, without the requirement of obtaining a visa.
- Visa on Arrival: Visa on arrival means that travelers from specific countries can obtain a visa upon arriving at their destination country's airport or border checkpoint.

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