

When it comes to sanitation, India's way behind: HDR

126 OUT OF 177 ■ Water availability not a problem, access is; public mobilisation, governance needed

SONU JAIN

NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 9

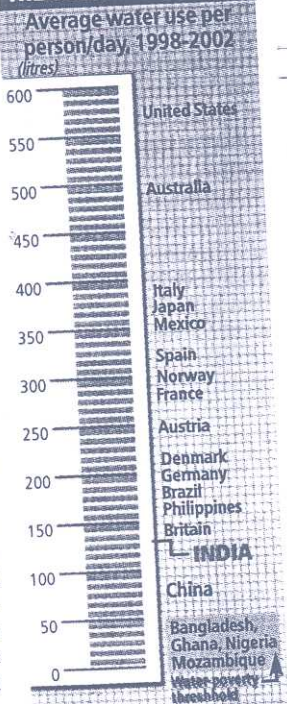
INDIA loses most number of lives to diarrhoea in the world, yet its military spending is eight times more than on water and sanitation. According to the latest Human Development Report (HDR) released today, while the country is making considerable progress on drinking water, it is lagging on the sanitation front. Nearly two-third of India has no access to sanitation even today. Of the 1.8 million diarrhoea deaths in the world, India has 450,000.

India has moved up a notch on the UNDP's Human Development Index — it is 126 out of 177 countries, compared to 127 a year ago. The HDI is a composite index based on income, health and education indicators.

At its present pace, India is going to miss the Millennium Development Goal on sanitation which is halving the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and sanitation.

The report called 'Beyond Scarcity: power, poverty and the global water crisis' is linked to the previous year's report

WORLDS APART: THE GLOBAL WATER GAP



which had shown that despite its economic growth, India's child mortality continued to remain high. Water and sanitation is key to saving lives of these children, the new report states.

Not surprisingly, Bangladesh has upped India on this front too. "India may outperform Bangladesh as a high growth globalisation

▶ CONTINUED ON PAGE 2