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[Business/Economy](#) : [India](#) up one notch in human development index at 126th

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New [Delhi](#), Nov 9 (IANS) India moved up one notch in the annual Human Development Index (HDI) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) - but still at an abysmally low position of 126 among 177 featured countries.

Among its South Asian neighbours, India's ranking for 2006 was better than those of Bhutan (135) Pakistan (134), Bangladesh (137) and Nepal (138), while [Maldives](#) (98) and Sri Lanka (93) fared better, says the index released globally Thursday.

Published every year since 1990, the index goes beyond a nation's gross domestic product (GDP) to measure the general well-being of people under three parameters - scope for long and healthy life, literacy levels and having decent standards of living.

Among these three parameters, India ranks 121st in terms of life expectancy, a much better 107th in adult literacy and 127th in combined primary, secondary and tertiary education enrolment.

In terms of per capita income, the country ranks 114th with \$3,139.

Making a specific reference to India on the issue of child mortality, the report says while India has outperformed Bangladesh in economic growth and income, its performance in reducing child deaths is below that of its neighbour.

"Measured by wealth generation, India is a success story of globalisation. Its GDP per capita has averaged four percent a year since 1990. But the rate for reducing child mortality has slowed from 2.9 percent a year in 1980s to 2.2 percent since 1990."

Even though the index is generally regarded as a measure of a country's overall development, UNDP acknowledges that it is in no way a comprehensive measure of human development.

"IT does not, for example, include important indicators such as inequality and difficult-to-measure indicators like respect for human rights and political freedoms," says the report.

"What it does provide is a broadened prism for viewing human progress and the complex relationship between income and well-being," says the report, which focuses on "Power, Poverty and the Global Water Crisis" this year.

"UNDP has to understand that we have more than one billion population in India. Our problems are varied and more complex," said Water Resources Minister Saifuddin Soz, releasing the report here.

"Comparison should be between comparable countries but not with countries like [Norway](#) and Sweden and Singapore," he said, adding that he has never been able to understand the ranking system of the index.

In the report, Norway once again ranks first followed by Iceland and Australia. Ireland, Sweden, Canada, Japan, the US, Switzerland and the Netherlands, in that order, occupy the 10 top positions in the index.

Niger, Sierra Leone, Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Central African Republic, Chad, Ethiopia, Burundi and Mozambique are ranked the lowest in the spectrum.

China, which with India is often compared because of the fast pace of economic growth in the two countries, is ranked 81st, while European

nations like Denmark (15th), France (16th), Italy (17th), Britain (18th), Spain (19th) and Germany (21st) have similar levels of human development.

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