

India achieves milestone in SDG rankings, enters top 100 list with 99th spot; global progress remains slow

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India has, for the first time, secured a spot among the top 100 countries in the sustainable development goals (SDG) index, according to the latest Sustainable Development Report (SDR) released Tuesday by the UN sustainable development solutions network.

India ranks 99th out of 167 countries on the 2025 SDG Index with a score of 67. This marks a steady rise from previous years, with India ranked 109th in 2024, 112th in 2023, and 121st in 2022.

China ranks 49th with a score of 74.4, while the US stands at 44th with 75.2 points. Among India's neighbours, Bhutan ranks 74th with 70.5, Nepal 85th with 68.6, Bangladesh 114th with 63.9, and Pakistan 140th with 57. India's maritime neighbours, Maldives and

Sri Lanka, are placed at 53rd and 93rd positions respectively.

The SDGs were adopted in 2015 with the aim of ensuring no one is left behind in global development by 2030. Countries are scored on a scale of 0 to 100, with 100 meaning all 17 goals have been fully achieved.

India's rises in SDG

The report warned that global progress has largely stalled, with only 17% of the SDG targets likely to be met by 2030. It cited conflicts, structural vulnerabilities, and limited fiscal space as key barriers to progress.

European countries, particularly Nordic nations, continue to lead the rankings. Finland tops the index, followed by Sweden and Denmark. Nineteen of the top 20 countries are in Europe. However, even these high-ranking countries face difficulties meeting climate and biodiversity goals due to unsustainable consumption.

East and South Asia have made the most SDG progress since 2015, driven by rapid socioeconomic growth. Nepal (+11.1), Cambodia (+10), the Philippines (+8.6), Bangladesh (+8.3), and Mongolia (+7.7) have shown the fastest improvements in the region. Other countries showing notable progress include Benin, Uzbekistan, Peru, the UAE, Costa Rica, and Saudi Arabia.

While global progress is slow, many countries have improved access to basic services such as electricity, mobile broadband, internet, and healthcare. However, five areas have seen significant setbacks: obesity (SDG 3), press freedom (SDG 16), nitrogen management (SDG 15), biodiversity (SDG 15), and corruption (SDG 16).

The report also highlighted global commitment to UN multilateralism, with Barbados, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago ranked as the top three most supportive countries. Among G20 nations, Brazil ranks highest at 25th, and Chile leads among OECD countries at 7th. The United States, which has distanced itself from the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda, ranks last at 193rd for the second year in a row.

The report comes ahead of the fourth international conference on financing for development (FfD4) in Seville, Spain. It emphasises that the current global financial system is broken, favoring rich nations while neglecting

emerging and developing economies. The report calls for urgent reform to ensure capital flows more effectively to these regions.