

UNDP's Human Development Index-2020

December 18, 2020

In news

India dropped two ranks in the United Nations' Human Development Index this year, standing at 131 out of 189 countries.

What is HDI?

- HDI is an assessment of a nation's health, education and standards of living.
- The HDI was created to emphasize that people and their capabilities should be the ultimate criteria for assessing the development of a country, not economic growth alone.



Human Development Index is part of the Human Development Report of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

For the first time, the UNDP introduced a new metric to reflect the impact caused by each country's per-capita carbon emissions and its material footprint, which measures the amount of fossil fuels, metals and other resources used to make the goods and services it consumes.

Status of Countries around the world

- Although this year's report covers 2019 only, and does

not account for the impact of COVID, it projected that in 2020, global HDI would fall below for the first time in the three decades since the Index was introduced.

- Norway, which tops the HDI, falls 15 places if this new metric is used, leaving Ireland at the top of the table.
- In fact, 50 countries would drop entirely out of the “very high human development group” category, using this new metric, called the Planetary Pressures-adjusted HDI, or PHDI.
- Australia falls 72 places in the ranking, while the United States and Canada would fall 45 and 40 places respectively, reflecting their disproportionate impact on natural resources.
- The oil and gas-rich Gulf States also fell steeply.
- China would drop 16 places from its current ranking of 85.
- China’s net emissions (8 gigatonnes) are 34% below its territorial emissions (12.5 gigatonnes) compared with 19% in India and 15% in Sub-Saharan Africa.

India’s status

- It praised India’s record in achieving its carbon emissions goals so far, and urged Indian policy makers to take the path of sustainable development.
- According to the UNDP’s report India’s gross national income per capita fell to \$6,681 in 2019 from \$6,829 in 2018 on purchasing power parity (PPP) basis.
- The report said evidence from Colombia to India indicates that financial security and ownership of land improve women’s security and reduce the risk of gender-based violence, clearly indicating that owning land can empower women.
- It further said indigenous children in Cambodia, India and Thailand show more malnutrition-related issues such as stunting and wasting.

- As per the UNDP report, In India different responses in parent behaviour, as well as some disinvestment in girls' health and education, have led to higher malnutrition among girls than among boys as a consequence of shocks likely linked to climate change
- The report said that under the Paris Agreement, India pledged to reduce the emission intensity of its GDP from the 2005 level by 33-35% by 2030 and to obtain 40% of electric power capacity from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030.
- The report also lauded that Solar capacity in India increased from 2.6 gigawatts in March 2014 to 30 gigawatts in July 2019, achieving its target of 20 gigawatts four years ahead of schedule

What is new in this year's index?

Planetary pressures-adjusted Human Development Index

- PHDI is an experimental index that adjusts the Human Development Index (HDI) for planetary pressures in the Anthropocene.
- The PHDI discounts the HDI for pressures on the planet to reflect a concern for intergenerational inequality, similar to the Inequality-adjusted HDI adjustment which is motivated by a concern for intragenerational inequality.
- It is computed as the product of the HDI and $(1 - \text{index of planetary pressures})$ where $(1 - \text{index of planetary pressures})$ can be seen as an adjustment factor.
- **The PHDI is the level of human development adjusted by carbon dioxide emissions per person (production-based) and material footprint per capita to account for the excessive human pressure on the planet.**
- It should be seen as an incentive for transformation. In an ideal scenario where there are no pressures on the planet, the PHDI equals the HDI.
- However, as pressures increase, the PHDI falls below the

HDI. In this sense, the PHDI measures the level of human development when planetary pressures are considered.

Interactive Dashboard: Human Development and the Anthropocene

- The 2020 Human Development Report explores a suite of metrics for measuring human development in the Anthropocene.
- This new dashboard, with four dimensions and 21 indicators organized according to the Report's findings
- It provides a glimpse into the complex interactions between people and ecosystems and helps monitor country progress towards easing planetary pressures and social imbalances.
- **The four dimensions are;**
 1. The status of human development
 2. Energy system
 3. Material cycles and
 4. Transforming our future.