

# 415 million Indians lifted out of poverty in 15 years: UNDP report

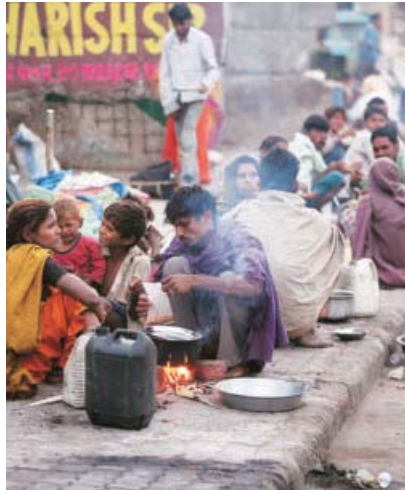
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Around 415 million people moved out of poverty in India between 2005-06 and 2019-21. “The poorest states and groups, including children and people in disadvantaged caste groups, had the fastest absolute progress,” said the Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2023 report from the United Nations Development Programme and Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI).

The latest instalment of the report released on Tuesday noted that 25 countries across the world, including India and China, had shown an encouraging trend by reducing deprivations experienced by poor people in the last 15 years.

India still lives in a relatively poor neighbourhood, shows an analysis of data from the report. As many as 231 million people in India are experiencing multidimensional poverty, the highest in the neighbourhood in absolute terms though lower in percentage terms. While China’s poverty headcount stood at over 50 million as per the latest data, it was over 80 million for Pakistan and 40 million for Bangladesh. India had a higher incidence of poverty compared to China. For every 100 people, while 16 experienced multidimensional poverty in India, four did so in China. India,



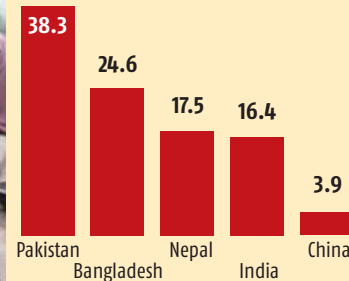
however, does better than countries like Pakistan and Bangladesh (chart 1).

Poverty is calculated using 10 indicators under the broad heads of health, education, and standard of living each with various subcategories.

The data shows that 5.6 per cent of the population in India does not have access to basic assets. However, the share was 1.2 per cent in China. A household without access to assets, such as a radio, animal cart, phone, television, computer, refrigerator, bicycle, or motorcycle, is considered deprived. Among other neighbouring countries, the share was 15.9 per cent in Bangladesh, 12.2 per cent in Pakistan

## NEIGHBOURHOOD POVERTY ESTIMATES

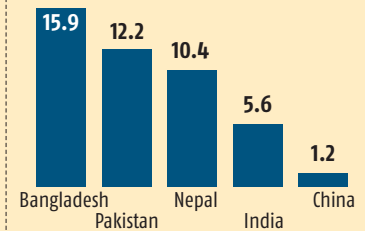
Population in multidimensional poverty (%)



Figures as per latest available data. Assets include radio, animal cart, phone, television, computer, refrigerator, bicycle or motorcycle. Source: Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2023

## BETTER ACCESS TO BASIC ASSETS

People who are multidimensionally poor and deprived in terms of assets (%)



and 10.4 per cent in Nepal (chart 2).

In India, 13.6 per cent of the population was deprived of housing in 2019-21 compared to 44.9 per cent in 2005-06. The latest available data shows that the share is higher in Pakistan at 30.6 per cent, followed by Bangladesh (22.8 per cent) and Nepal (16.4 per cent). Figures for China were not available. If a house is not made of ‘durable housing materials’ it is considered deprived, according to the report.

While government food subsidies and various food programmes have resulted in increasing access to food among the Indian poor, the levels of nutrition among the poor in China are

far better. Just 3.4 per cent of the poor in China experience deprivation of nutrition compared to 12 per cent of the poor in India. In fact, India lags behind Nepal (9.4 per cent) and Bangladesh (8.7 per cent) on this indicator.

Most of the progress mentioned in the report was achieved before the pandemic and in the absence of updated data, it is unclear how the Covid-19 pandemic has affected the progress of these countries. A World Bank report last year estimated that despite making headway in poverty reduction since 2011, about 56 million people in India were pushed into poverty after the pandemic which hit India in 2020.