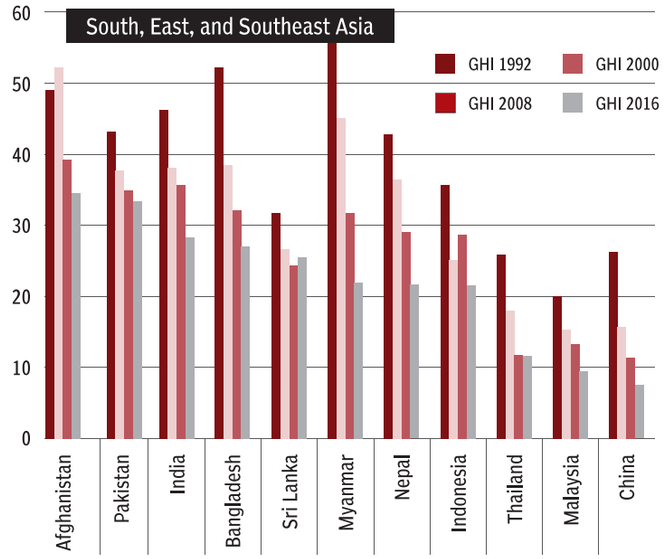
Pervasive penury

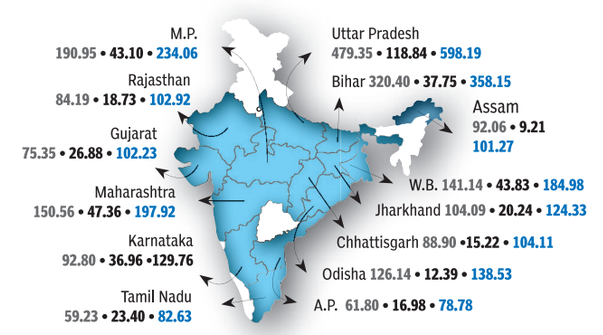
Despite making much progress over the past two decades, India still has a long way to go in its battle to eradicate poverty. By RAMESH CHAKRAPANI

The latest Global Hunger Index (GHI) from the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), which ranks India 97th out of 118 countries, is yet another indicator that the country has much ground to cover in its fight against hunger and poverty. It is a testament to the administration's collective failure in addressing these issues despite India's stature as a growing economy and one of the world's leading producers of food. The report also points out that various poorer countries in Asia have achieved greater progress in this area compared with India.

The total expenditure on social services has zoomed from about Rs.3.80 lakh crore in 2008-09 to more than Rs.8.68 lakh crore in 2014-15, but when seen as a percentage of total expenditure, the spending on education has stagnated and that on health and other sectors has actually fallen. Government data for 2011-12 showed that nearly 27 crore people remained below the poverty line.



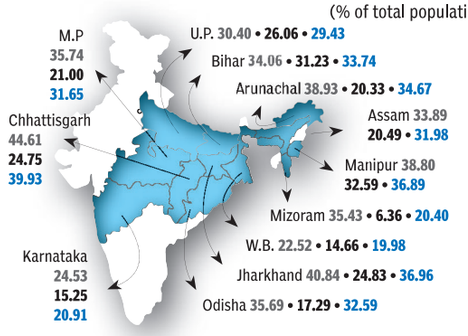
Top States by number of people below poverty line 2011-12 (in lakh)



All India 2,166.58 • 531.25 • 2,697.83

Top States by people below poverty line 2011-12

(% of total population)



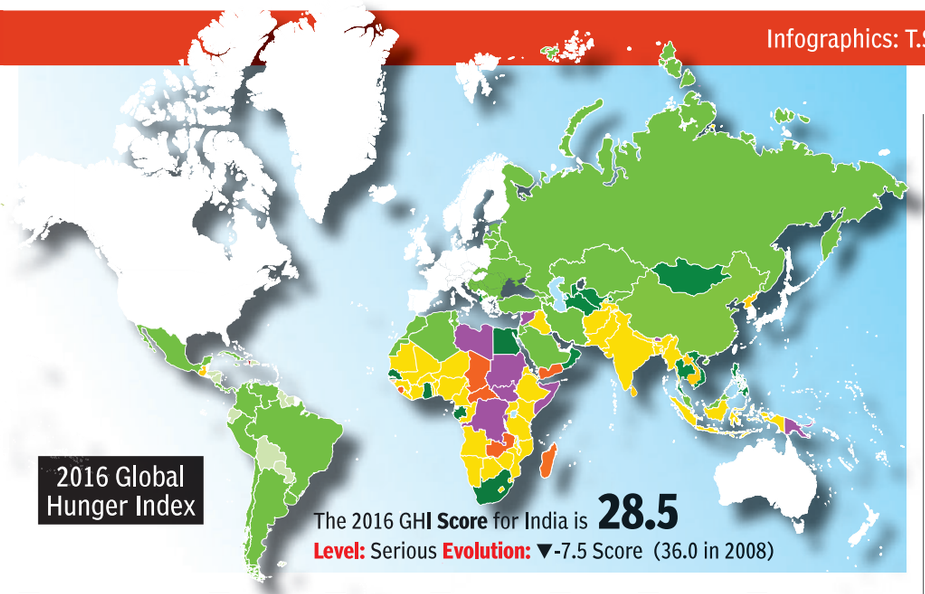
Expenditure on social services Centre+States

	2008-09 (₹)	(%)	(%)	2012-13 (₹)	(%)	(%)	2013-14* (₹)	(%)	(%)	2014-15** (₹)	(%)	(%)
Total expenditure on social services	3,80,628	6.8	–	6,54,602	6.6	–	8,11,536	7.2	–	8,68,476	6.7	–
Education	1,62,008	2.9	10.1	3,11,319	3.1	10.9	3,68,475	3.2	11.0	3,95,897	1.2	10.2
Health	74,273	1.3	4.6	1,23,264	1.2	4.3	1,46,211	1.3	4.3	1,54,567	2.5	4.0
Others	1,44,347	2.6	9.0	2,20,020	2.2	7.7	2,96,850	2.6	8.8	3,18,011	–	8.2

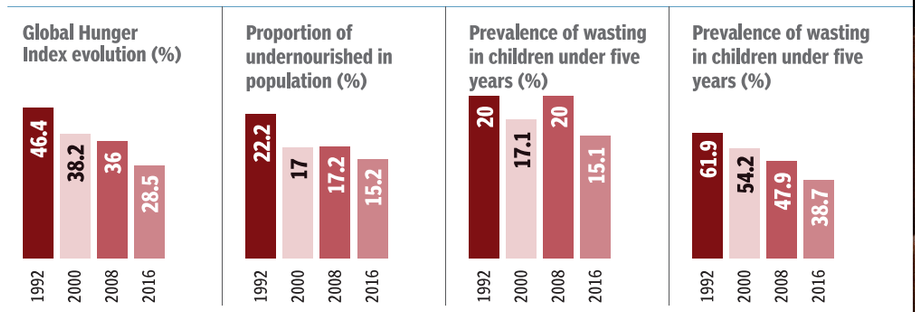
Source: MOSPI *Revised estimate **Budgeted estimate

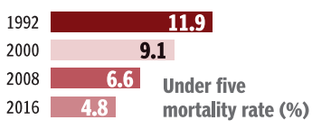
Expenditure on social services as percentage of GDP | Expenditure as percentage of total expenditure

Infographics: T.S. Vijayanandan



Central African Rep.	46.1	Lao PDR	28.1	Gambia, The	20.9	Suriname	10.1	Macedonia, FYR	5.8
Chad	44.3	Guinea	28.1	Guatemala	20.7	Azerbaijan	9.8	Jordan	5.7
Zambia	39	Rwanda	27.4	Philippines	19.9	Malaysia	9.7	Uruguay	5.6
Haiti	36.9	Guinea-Bissau	27.4	Senegal	16.5	Panama	9.3	Tunisia	5.5
Madagasca	35.4	Bangladesh	27.1	Bolivia	15.4	Morocco	9.3	Romania	5.5
Yemen, Rep.	35	Malawi	26.9	Vietnam	14.5	Moldova	9.2	Slovak Republic	5.3
Sierra Leone	35	Congo, Rep.	26.6	Guyana	14.5	Kyrgyz Republic	9.1	Ukraine	<5
Afghanistan	34.8	Uganda	26.4	Ghana	13.9	Algeria	8.7	Turkey	<5
Timor-Leste	34.3	Côte d'Ivoire	25.7	Ecuador	13.9	Armenia	8.7	Saudi Arabia	<5
Niger	33.7	Nigeria	25.5	Mongolia	13.8	Peru	8.6	Montenegro	<5
Pakistan	33.4	Sri Lanka	25.5	Egypt, Arab Rep.	13.7	Trinidad & Tobago	8.5	Latvia	<5
Ethiopia	33.4	Swaziland	24.2	Nicaragua	13.3	Fiji	8.5	Lithuania	<5
Angola	32.8	Benin	23.2	Mauritius	13.2	Colombia	8.5	Kuwait	<5
Djibouti	32.7	Botswana	23	Honduras	13.2	Bulgaria	8.3	Croatia	<5
Mozambique	31.7	Cameroon	22.9	Uzbekistan	13.1	Georgia	8.2	Estonia	<5
Namibia	31.4	Lesotho	22.7	Turkmenistan	12.3	Jamaica	7.9	Cuba	<5
Burkina Faso	31	Togo	22.4	Gabon	12	Kazakhstan	7.8	Costa Rica	<5
Liberia	30.7	Mauritania	22.1	Albania	11.9	China	7.7	Chile	<5
Tajikistan	30	Myanmar	22	South Africa	11.8	Mexico	7.2	Brazil	<5
Zimbabwe	28.8	Iraq	22	Thailand	11.8	Serbia	7.1	Belarus	<5
North Korea	28.6	Nepal	21.9	El Salvador	11.2	Lebanon	7.1	Bosnia & Herzegovina	<5
India	28.5	Kenya	21.9	Dominican Republic	11.1	Venezuela, RB	7	Argentina	<5
Tanzania	28.4	Indonesia	21.9	Paraguay	10.4	Russian Federation	6.8		
Mali	28.1	Cambodia	21.7	Oman	10.4	Iran, Islamic Rep.	6.7		





Maternal mortality ratio over the years India

1999-2001	2001-2003	2004-2006	2007-2009	2009-2011	2011-13
327	301	254	212	178	167

