

# Bangladesh most gender-equal country in South Asia for 7th time

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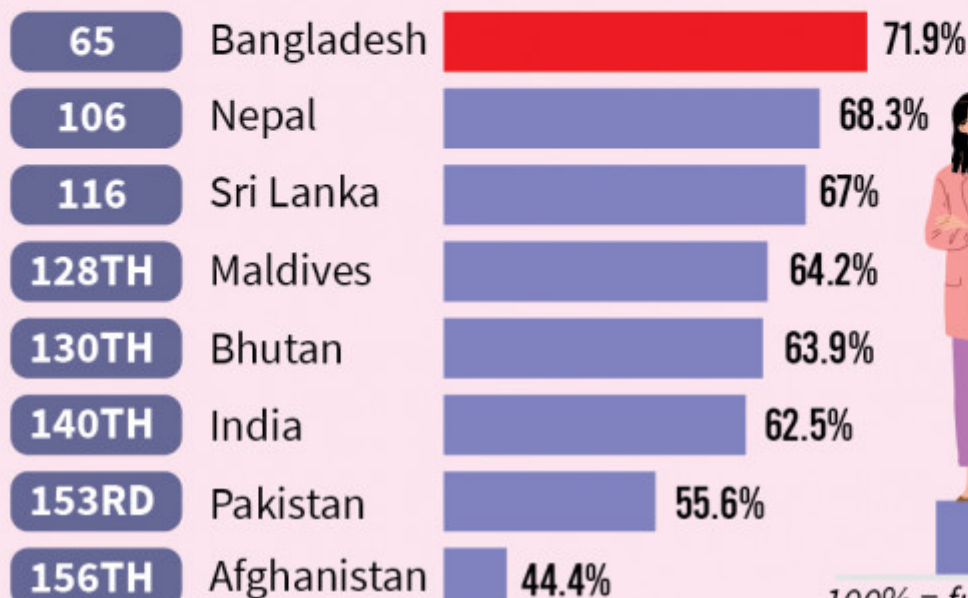
# GLOBAL GENDER GAP INDEX 2021

## GLOBAL RANK

(Out of 156 countries)

## GENDER PARITY IN SOUTH ASIA

(% of gender gap closed)



100% = full gender parity

## BANGLADESH'S PERFORMANCE ON 4 KEY DIMENSIONS OF GENDER GAP

(% of gender gap closed)



	Economic Participation and Opportunity	Educational Attainment	Health and Survival	Political Empowerment
GLOBAL RANK	147TH	121ST	134TH	7TH
% OF GENDER GAP CLOSED	41.8%	95.1%	96.2%	54.6%

Source: WEF

Bangladesh is the most gender-equal country in South Asia for the seventh time in a row, according to the Global Gender Gap Report produced by the World Economic Forum (WEF).

Despite being the best performer in the region, however, Bangladesh has fallen 15 spots to rank 65th among 156 countries on the 2021 index, which benchmarks countries based on how close they are to reaching gender equality.

The 15th edition of the report reveals that Bangladesh's overall gender gap has widened by 0.7 percentage points. As a result, its global position has deteriorated.

However, Bangladesh is the only South Asian country in the top 100 countries globally, having closed 71.9% of its overall gender gap so far.

Nepal is the second best performer in the region, as the country narrowed the overall gender gap by 68.3%. It has been ranked 106th.

Bangladesh has managed to stay ahead of all South Asian nations since 2014 by surpassing Sri Lanka that year.

In the latest report released on Wednesday, Sri Lanka is the third best performer in the region after closing the gender gap by 67%. It has been placed at the 116th position on the index.

It is followed by the Maldives at 128th position and Bhutan at 130th position.

India's position on the index is 140th, third from the bottom in the region.

Afghanistan has been named as the least gender-equal country in the world and so in South Asia, with gender gap closed by 44.4%.

Pakistan stands 153rd globally, being the second-worst performer in the region.

Region-wise, South Asia is the second-lowest performer after the Middle East and North Africa combined, bridging 62.3% of its gender gap. It is now expected to take 195.4 years to close the gender gap.

Iceland is the most gender-equal country in the world for the 12th time, being closest to achieving gender equality. It has narrowed the gender gap by 89.2%, followed by Finland 86.1%, Norway 84.9%, New Zealand 84%, and Sweden 82.3%.

### **Bangladesh's performance on 4 key dimensions**

The WEF prepares the index measuring gender-based gaps on four key dimensions: economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment.

The scorecard placed Bangladesh at 147th in economic participation and opportunity, 121st in educational attainment, 134th in health and survival, and 7th in political empowerment.

The report highlights that Bangladesh's declining performance can be attributed almost exclusively to a step backwards in closing "economic participation and opportunity" gender gap, which measures labour force participation, wage equality for similar work, estimated earned income and proportion of women among legislators, senior officials and managers, and among professionals and technical workers.

The progress in gender parity in Bangladesh is more in terms of "political empowerment" as 54.6% of the gender gap has been closed so far.

"Bangladesh is the country where a woman has been in a head-of-state role the longest (27 years) over the past 50 years. Yet, more must be done to involve women at all levels of political life," WEF said in the report.

In terms of educational attainment that depends on literacy rate and enrolment in primary, secondary and tertiary education, Bangladesh has made a remarkable progress bridging 95.1% of the gender gap.


As many as 37 countries have already attained gender parity in this regard.


Although gender gaps in health and survival as measured by sex ratio at birth and life expectancy are relatively small, the report says a broader shift is required to achieve better security and health conditions for women.


As the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic continues to be felt, the global gender gap seems to have been extended by a generation from 99.5 years to 135.6 years.


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