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Bhutan at a lower risk of failure in South Asia

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Bhutan has managed to duck the list of the top 25 faltering states in the world, according to the American bimonthly magazine, Foreign Policy.

The magazine, owned by the Washington Post company, in its 2009 survey of failing states or those at the risk of failure, states that all of India's neighbors, 'except for tiny Bhutan', figure in the top 25 list.

However, Bhutan, ranked 48th, falls among the 60 states vulnerable to the risk of failure.

And while Afghanistan remains at number seven in the table topped by Somalia, the war torn country still ranks number one in South Asia's failing states.

Pakistan is ranked 10th, just marginally better than its 9th position in last year's table, followed by Burma (13th), Bangladesh (19th), Sri Lanka (22nd) and Nepal (25th) in the list of 177 countries ranked from most to least at risk of failure.

India at 87th position has evaded the list of 60 most vulnerable countries, but China wasn't as fortunate in the 57th spot.

The magazine attributes various factors such as a weak government, faulty economy, excessive violence, corrupt leaders, bad neighbors, global recession, or simply geography itself for each state that is failing or at the risk of failure.

According to Foreign Policy, the higher the country is on the list, based on 12 indicators measuring state cohesion and performance, the closer it is to failure.

Bhutan scored 87.3 out of 120 in the 12 indicators with 10 points being the maximum for each indicator. Somalia, on the other hand, topped the list with a score of 114.7. The lower the score of the country, according to editors of the magazine, the lower it is at risk of failing.

Meanwhile, the indicators (Bhutan's points in brackets) are - Demographic Pressures (6.5), Refugees/IDPs (7.5), Group Grievance (7.9), Human Flight (6.8), Uneven Development (8.7), Economic Decline (7.5), De-legitimization of the State (7.4), Public Services (7.2), Human Rights (8.4), Security Apparatus (5.5), Factionalized Elites (7.7) and External Intervention (6.2).

The 12 indicators of state cohesion and performance, according to Foreign Policy, were compiled through a close examination of more than 30,000 publicly available sources.