



## POPULATION PRESSURE IN INDIA - GS I AND II MAINS

Q. India's demographic transition presents opportunities for demographic advantage but also comes with a challenge of demographic disaster. Elucidate (15 marks, 250 words)

**News:** *What India Becoming the World's Most Populous Country Means*

### What's in the news?

- India's projected transition as the most populous country from China by mid-2023 presents opportunities for demographic advantage, but also requires focusing on the available demographic dividend.
- The population growth, size, and composition must be viewed from an empirical and scientific perspective to understand whether it is a dividend or a disaster.

### India's Population Projection

- A UN report released recently has provided the first official confirmation that India's population is expected to surpass that of China by the middle of this year at the latest.
- The annual State of World Population report by the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) has pegged India's mid-2023 population at 142.86 crore, marginally ahead of China's 142.57 crore, which is 2.9 million higher than China's population

### State of World Population Report:

- It is an annual report published by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), which provides a global overview of population trends and issues.
- The report covers a wide range of topics related to the population, such as fertility, mortality, migration, family planning, and gender equality.
- It also includes analysis and recommendations for policymakers and governments to address population challenges and promote sustainable development.
- The report is widely regarded as a key reference for researchers, policymakers, and international organizations working on population and development issues.

### How India's Population Growth can be a Resource?

#### 1. A Larger Workforce:

- A growing population means a larger workforce, which, if trained and employed, can contribute to economic growth and development.

#### 2. Domestic Market:

- A larger population can create a larger domestic market, which can drive economic growth by increasing demand for goods and services.



### 3. Innovation and Technological Advancements:

- A larger population can provide a greater pool of knowledge and expertise, and a more diverse range of perspectives and ideas, which can lead to innovation and technological advancements.

### 4. Investment in Infrastructure:

- Population growth can create opportunities for investment in infrastructure, education, and health, which can further stimulate economic development.

### 5. Cultural Richness:

- A larger population can lead to cultural richness and diversity.
- With a diverse population comes a range of languages, traditions, and cultural practices, which can contribute to a vibrant and dynamic society.

### 6. Diplomatic Influence:

- A larger population can give a country greater diplomatic influence on the world stage.
- As one of the world's most populous countries, India has significant diplomatic influence and can use its demographic size as a bargaining tool in international negotiations.

## How India's Population Growth can be a Burden?

### 1. Strain on Resources:

- A growing population can put a strain on natural resources, such as water, food, and energy.
- This can lead to environmental degradation, scarcity, and conflict.

### 2 Unemployment:

- A larger population can create a mismatch between the supply and demand of jobs, leading to high unemployment rates, particularly among young people

### 3. Poverty:

- Population growth can exacerbate poverty, particularly in rural areas and among marginalized communities.
- This can create social and economic inequality and limit access to education, healthcare, and other basic needs.

### 4. Overcrowding:

- A larger population can lead to overcrowding, particularly in urban areas. This can create poor living conditions, increased pollution, and health hazards.

### 5. Infrastructure:

- A growing population can put a strain on infrastructure, such as transportation, housing, and sanitation. This can lead to inadequate services and poor living conditions.



## 6. Health:

- A larger population can increase the spread of disease and illness, particularly in areas with poor healthcare infrastructure.
- This can lead to public health crises and decreased life expectancy.

## 7. Education:

- Population growth can put a strain on education systems, particularly in terms of providing quality education to all.
- This can limit social and economic mobility and contribute to inequality.

## 8. Migration:

- A larger population can lead to migration, particularly to urban areas, which can create social and economic challenges, such as increased crime rates and inequality.

## Way Forward:

- India's relatively younger population provides higher support ratios, with lesser disease, disability, and caring burden.
- India has the potential to become a worldwide market for both production and consumption, with lower manufacturing costs due to a relatively cheaper workforce.
- Available demographic opportunity in the form of a greater share of the working age population has the potential to boost per capita GDP by an additional 43% by 2061.

While India's demographic transition presents opportunities for demographic advantage, it must focus on reaping the available demographic dividend. The composition of India's population presents prospects for demographic dividends, but certain mechanisms must be employed to translate demographic opportunity into economic gains. Policies that support an enabling environment that can provide high-quality education, good healthcare, respectable employment opportunities, good infrastructure, and gender empowerment are essential.